

## Student Travel Guidelines

Travel for students requires careful planning. Travel necessitates administrative and parental/guardian approval, suitable behavior for the occasion, and sufficient orientation to ensure the most effective learning outcomes. Travel may be approved and sponsored by the District, provided the travel is directly related to the curriculum or is an approved extracurricular activity. The trip should be appropriate for the age and maturity level of the group. Students should understand the field trip and what is to be learned. After the trip, the teacher should, with the students, review and evaluate the objectives of the trip.

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

1. Domestic travel – travel within 48 contiguous United States.
  - a. Local travel – travel within a ten-mile boundary of the city limits of Waco.
  - b. Out-of-city travel – travel that extends beyond ten miles of the city limits of Waco and is incorporated totally within the State of Texas.
  - c. Out-of-state-travel – travel that extends beyond the Texas border and is incorporated totally within the 48 contiguous United States.
2. International travel – travel that extends beyond the 48 contiguous United States.

Written request of all student travel defined in this policy shall be submitted for approval as follows:

All local travel shall be approved by the campus principal, and the appropriate athletic, fine arts, and/or academic UIL administrator (if applicable), at least two weeks prior to the scheduled departure.

All out-of-city travel shall be approved by the campus principal, the appropriate athletic, fine arts, and/or academic UIL administrator (if applicable), and the principal's immediate supervisor before the scheduled departure. All out-of-state travel shall be approved by the campus principal, the appropriate athletic, fine arts, and/or academic UIL administrator (if applicable), the principal's immediate supervisor and the Superintendent prior to the scheduled departure or immediately as students qualify for the event.

All international travel shall be approved by the campus principal, the appropriate athletic, fine arts, and/or academic UIL administrator (if applicable), the principal's immediate supervisor, the Superintendent, and the Board prior to the scheduled date of departure.

Students should be transported in school or chartered buses reserved through approved vendors, bonded and insured transportation carriers. In certain situations when transporting small numbers of students, rented vehicles may be used, the vehicle must be reserved with from an approved vendor. The operator of the vehicle must be appropriately licensed, insured and approved by Waco ISD. The trip coordinator and operator of the vehicle will ensure that the number of passengers does not exceed the designated capacity of the vehicle and that each passenger is secured by a safety belt. If a private vehicle is used (with principal approval), the owner of the vehicle assumes all liability.

Instructional staff and chaperones are responsible for student safety and conduct while on the trip. Field trips may be canceled at the discretion of the sponsor with prior approval of the principal for any of the following events or any other event, which could possibly jeopardize the safety, and security of the students and/or District employees including but not limited to:

- a. Unsafe conditions
- b. Lack of funds
- c. Natural disasters
- d. Travel advisories issued for the geographical area

Prior to trip departure, the parent or guardian of each student participating in a trip covered by this policy shall submit a signed permission/notification form and an emergency medical information form for all trips. Only one set of forms shall be required each year for all pre-scheduled trips within a specific organization (i.e., choir, football).

All transportation for student travel shall be arranged to meet District regulations. [See CNA(LLEGAL)]

Students may be excluded from domestic and international trips under the following conditions:

1. Without documented parental consent for the trip.
2. Restrictions based on discipline management guidelines.
3. Nonparticipation in fund-raising activities if activities were available to assist in payment of expenses.
4. Noncompliance with pre-approved criteria for the trip that do not waive the following:
  - a. Students may not be excluded from a trip that occurs during the school day(s) due to insufficient personal funds.
  - b. Students otherwise able may not be excluded solely because of their disabilities. Special arrangements, if said assistance will allow student(s) access, shall be made to allow the student(s) to participate.

Students shall comply with all Board policies and the Student Code of Conduct regarding discipline and conduct while traveling. Students shall receive written notification of such requirements and expectations prior to departure.

All students participating in Board approved extracurricular and/or domestic and international UIL related trips must comply with the academic eligibility requirements as specified in current UIL guide lines.

Absences for participation in extracurricular trips that require a student to miss a class other than the sponsoring class or course shall be designated an extracurricular absence under the Texas Education Code ten day absence limitation rule, in accordance with 19 TAC 76.1(c). [See FM(LLEGAL)]

Students on all domestic and international trips shall be accompanied by at least one professional District employee. The student/adult ratio for each trip shall be determined on an individual trip basis. Adult chaperones of the same sex as the traveling students must accompany students traveling out of city, out of state, or internationally. This same sex requirements shall be waived if the parents or guardians of all the students on the trip agree in writing to waive the requirement.

Prior to the first trip, all District employee trip sponsors and adult chaperones for domestic or international student trips shall participate in training provided by a professional District or campus employee. The training shall include:

1. General sponsor/chaperone responsibilities
2. Overview of the District Student Code of Conduct
3. Safety and emergency medical information and procedures
4. Other, as determined by the District employee sponsor

Trip itinerary and related details shall be provided to each chaperone prior to each specific trip. The trip coordinator must be aware of students on prescribed medication and must keep and monitor the administration of the prescribed medication while on the trip. The sponsor must have a signed copy of the student's Physician/Parent Request for Administration of Medicine or Special Procedures by School Personnel, a copy of which may be obtained from the school nurse. In order to know what to do in the event of an accident or illness while on a trip. The teacher sponsor should:

- Plan, with the school nurse, what to do in case of an accident or illness before leaving on the trip.
- Render first aid for minor injuries, such as minor scrapes and cuts.
- Call the local police department/emergency medical service for more serious injuries. If the emergency medical service transports the student to the hospital, the sponsor or his/her adult designee must accompany the student and remain with the student until the Parent/Guardian arrives.
- Notify 1.) Principal, and 2.) Parent/Guardian.
- Not assume hospital costs. This is the responsibility of the Parent/Guardian.

All sponsors/chaperones for any travel other than local shall pass a criminal records check. Prior to the first trip and at the beginning of each school year thereafter, all District sponsors and volunteer chaperones shall be required to sign an agreement to abide by all policies covering school trips and school functions.

The failure of chaperones to comply with school policies shall be reported to school officials and the chaperones shall be disqualified from future service. Any violation of the law by a chaperone shall be reported to the proper authorities.

After returning from the student trip, the District employee sponsor(s) shall submit a final statement of expenses to the campus activity fund manager or District Accounts Payable using the designated procedures form.

In the event a trip is cancelled, the senior administrator approving the trip shall be notified immediately.

### **Fiscal Responsibilities**

Outside of UIL contests and events only pre-approved competitions will be subsidized by district funds for National Competition. Pre-Approval forms shall be submitted to the campus principal for initial review with final approval completed by the office of the Superintendent. Any event that is not-preapproved must fundraise all required monies for the event. Approval of the possibility of National Competition does not take the place of the normal field trip approval process.

Organizations that are approved to have National Competitions shall fundraise a minimum of \$500.00 per student anticipated to be advancing. Fundraising is for the benefit of all advancing students and should not be designated to any particular student. Accounts of organizations carry over from year to year and therefore monies not used in one fiscal year may be used to offset costs in subsequent years.

Funds to offset costs above and beyond the \$500.00 per student shall be controlled at the district level within the office of Secondary Education.

## Student Meal Rates

Meals provided to students may be purchased in one of three ways:

1. A travel advance can be given to the sponsor to pay for the students' meals directly. Receipts for all meal purchases must be obtained by the sponsor and submitted to the Business & Financial Services Department along with a copy of the check stub, a list of the students attending, and any unused funds within ten days from return of the trip. A tax-exemption form must be used for in- state student meals. Sales tax on student meals is not an allowable expenditure and must be reimbursed by the sponsor to the district if incurred. The purchase of restaurant gift cards is prohibited. The amount for all advanced amounts not supported by a receipt will require reimbursement by the sponsor to the district. The purchase of meals in excess of allowable amounts will require reimbursement by the sponsor to the district.
2. A travel card can be provided to the sponsor for use in paying for student meals. Receipts for all meal purchases must be obtained by the sponsor and submitted to the Business & Financial Services Department along with a list of the students attending, as required by the procedures established for travel card (procurement card) use. A tax-exemption form must be used for in-state student meals. Sales tax on student meals is not an allowable expenditure and must be reimbursed by the sponsor to the district if incurred. Charges for meals in excess of the allowable amounts will require reimbursement by the sponsor to the district. Charges for meals without a receipt will require reimbursement by the sponsor to the district. Sponsors who have a history of lost receipts, incurring sales tax, or exceeding allowable meal amounts will lose their ability to use a procurement card for future travel meals.
3. A travel advance can be given to the sponsor based upon the number of students and the meal allowance amount. The sponsor may hand out the meal money directly to the students. The sponsor must obtain a signature for funds provided to each student upon disbursement. The funds then become the responsibility of the student and the sponsor is not responsible for submitting any receipts for the meals purchased directly by the students. Any remaining funds may be kept by the student. Advances not supported by student signatures will require reimbursement of those funds by the sponsor to the district. The student signatures must be obtained by the sponsor and submitted to the Business & Financial Services Department along with a copy of the check stub and any unused funds within ten days from return of the trip.

The daily amount of meal money for students for in-state travel is as follows:  
\$9 for breakfast, if leaving prior to 7 a.m.\* (see note below)

\$12 for lunch

\$16 for dinner, if returning after 6 p.m. (meal must not take place in Waco)

\*If breakfast is being served at the campus, please eat at the campus prior to departure.

If the dates of travel are all full days and no meals are provided by the event, the full \$37 per day is to be provided to the student, unless the sponsor is paying for the meals directly on behalf of the students. The total number of meals advanced will be based on whether meals are provided by the event and the determination of which meals need to be provided to the students based upon the time of departure and return. Mandatory tips imposed by a restaurant are acceptable expenditures. Discretionary tips are not allowed and will need to be reimbursed to the district by the sponsor.

The same meal rates apply for all staff who travel with the students. If a staff member does not obtain an advance for their meals while traveling with students, they may seek reimbursement afterwards; however, receipts must be provided and they are limited to the student rate.

The daily amount of meal money for students for out-of-state travel is as follows:

\$14 for breakfast

\$16 for lunch

\$29 for dinner

If the dates of travel are all full days and no meals are provided by the event, the full \$59 per day is to be provided to the student, unless the sponsor is paying for the meals directly on behalf of the students. The total number of meals advanced will be based on whether meals are provided by the event and the determination of which meals need to be provided to the students based upon the time of departure and return. The district is not exempt from sales tax for out-of-state purchases; therefore, sales tax on out-of-state meals is an allowable expenditure. Mandatory tips imposed by a restaurant are acceptable expenditures. Discretionary tips are not allowed and will need to be reimbursed to the district by the sponsor.

## Hotels

Lodging reservations must be made through the Business Services Department. All efforts will be made to make arrangements in the hotel of the sponsor's choosing if the rates fall within district guidelines and are practical and reasonable. Up to four (4) students of the same sex may share a room together (for rooms with two double beds). This same ratio may be applied for larger or smaller rooms. Students do not share rooms with sponsors. Students shall not stay in a room by themselves unless their parent/guardian has agreed in writing to allow their student to stay by themselves. Parents cannot stay in district procured rooms with their student.

The link below should be used to determine the appropriate maximum lodging rates for in-state and out-of-state travel by location by month for travel with use of federal funds:

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>

These rates can change annually and are valid from October 1 – September 30 of each year.

If the city is not listed, but the county is listed, use the rate of the county.

## Airfare

The departure and return dates of the flight shall be based on the start and end times of the travel event and the distance of the travel location. Airline reservations must be made through the Business Services Department. All efforts will be made to make arrangements with the airport of the sponsor's choosing if practical and reasonable. All flights shall be purchased by the Business Services Department for the most economical route and schedule to meet the travel plans. This will take into consideration airfare amount, booking fee (if any), baggage fee, travel expenses to fly out of DFW rather than Waco, etc. This will be coordinated with the designated sponsor of the trip.

The actual cost of commercial air transportation (lowest coach fare) to accommodate the required travel dates of the travel event shall be set as the maximum allowable cost. All group travel will be booked as a group and there will be no customization of flight plans. Parent requests for a flight waiver will be accommodated if the request is made in advance of when the student's airfare is booked. The parent will be responsible for making their own flight reservations for their student and they will be reimbursed (after the trip) up to the amount that the district would have paid for the student, if the student would have traveled with the group. If a parent wishes to drive their student to the destination, the maximum mileage reimbursement that the parent would receive would be the amount that the district would have paid for the student's airfare. Any additional expenses such as additional hotel days, meals, etc., will be at the parent's expense.

For all flights, luggage charges, if any, shall be limited to one (1) checked-in bag, up to 50 pounds. Any other fees for baggage shall be at the student's parent's expense.

## **Props**

The cost of transporting any props or specialty items (i.e. history fair items) shall be reimbursed to the parent up to \$250 if receipts are provided.

Parents seeking reimbursement for transportation expenses forfeit their right for reimbursement if the request is not submitted within thirty days after return from travel.