

**East Ramapo
POLICY 4531
FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS**

Purpose:

The Board of Education recognizes that field trips are an essential extension of the instructional program, offering valuable opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning and social development outside the traditional classroom environment. This policy establishes guidelines for planning, approving, and conducting field trips to ensure they are safe, educationally beneficial, and accessible to all students.

Authorization and Approval:

1. The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures for field trip authorization, ensuring consistency across the district.
2. Field trips requiring travel outside of regular school hours, those involving overnight stays, or those deemed high-risk (e.g., physical activities, exposure to hazardous environments) must receive approval from the Superintendent of Schools.
3. Requests for trips completed within one day must be submitted at least two weeks (14 days) prior to the planned event, accompanied by detailed itineraries, risk assessments, and a breakdown of costs.
4. Requests for overnight trips must be submitted at least three months (90 days) prior to the planned event, accompanied by detailed itineraries, risk assessments, and a breakdown of costs.
5. The Superintendent's approval is required before any commitments are made regarding travel arrangements for overnight or high-risk trips.

Criteria for Field Trip Selection:

Field trips must be selected and planned to align with educational objectives and consider the following factors:

1. **Educational Value:** The trip should support and enhance the curriculum, offering specific learning outcomes that relate to classroom instruction.
2. **Age and Developmental Appropriateness:** Activities should be suitable for the age group and maturity levels of participating students.
3. **Logistical Considerations:** The distance of travel, duration of the trip, and transportation mode must be appropriate and manageable for the student group.
4. **Cost and Accessibility:** Efforts should be made to minimize costs and provide financial assistance when necessary, ensuring that no student is excluded due to financial constraints.
5. **Safety and Risk Assessment:** The trip must be assessed for potential risks, and adequate safety measures should be put in place. A detailed emergency plan must be developed for each trip.

Field Trip Procedures:

1. **Planning:** Teachers shall plan field trips with input from the building principal and ensure that the trip's goals are integrated into the broader educational program.
2. **Parental/Guardian Consent:** Written consent from a parent or guardian is required for all students participating in field trips. For overnight trips, additional consent may be required for specific activities.
3. **Transportation:** Transportation arrangements must be made in compliance with district policies and guidelines. When using private vehicles, the district must ensure that drivers have appropriate licenses and insurance.
4. **Supervision:** Adequate adult supervision, including staff and chaperones, must be maintained throughout the field trip. The ratio of supervisors to students should be appropriate for the nature of the activity.
5. **Emergency Procedures:** Teachers and chaperones shall be briefed on emergency protocols, including procedures for medical emergencies, student accountability, and contacting school authorities.

Financial Considerations:

1. Field trips should be planned to minimize costs to students and families. When feasible, funding may be sought from school funds, grants, or community organizations to subsidize expenses.
2. The district shall not deny a student's participation in a field trip due to an inability to pay. Principals and teachers should identify and address financial barriers to ensure inclusivity.

Overnight and Extended Field Trips:

1. Trips in excess of one day that involve overnight accommodations require comprehensive planning, including lodging details, a detailed itinerary, and provisions for student supervision during non-school hours.
2. Teachers shall submit requests for such trips at least three months (90 days) in advance, including risk management plans and cost estimates.

Legal and Regulatory References:

Education Law §§355, 701, et seq.; Health and Safety Guidelines for School Trips.

Adopted: 12-07-04

Revised: 01-07-25