

## **Field Trip Policy**

The Bristol Warren Regional School District (BWRSD) supports and encourages field trips and/or learning experiences provided outside of the regular classroom environment and off school premises. Activities must be selected for the purpose of expanding or enhancing in-class learning of a particular skill and/or concept and designed to improve education results, consistent with the purpose of the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Basic Education Program ("BEP"). See RICR 200-10-1.1.1.

Students, staff, and volunteer chaperones shall adhere to all district policies and procedures throughout the course of all field trips, including, but not limited to the Student Handbooks.

### **Student Accommodations**

All field trips must be in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Chapter 42-87 of the General Laws of Rhode Island in that all field trips, sites, and transportation arrangements are reviewed in advance for accessibility, and all necessary arrangements and/or accommodations are made in advance of the field trip. Accommodations must be available for all students eligible to attend a field trip with their peers. These accommodations include, but are not limited to, securing a wheelchair accessible bus, a wheelchair accessible venue, the provision of medications, the availability of adult support as needed, including a nurse when applicable.

### **Approval Process**

All field trips must be requested using the BWRSD Field Trip Proposal form. Exceptions to the timeline below must first be approved by the Superintendent.

**Field trips that meet the following criteria must be approved 30 days prior to the event by the building principal and Assistant Superintendent:**

- The round trip travel is less than 150 miles, and/or
- An overnight stay is not required, and/or
- Fundraising activity is not required.

**Field trips that meet the following criteria must be approved 45 days prior to the event by the building principal, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent of Schools or their designee. This includes anticipated trips:**

- The round trip travel is more than 150 miles and/or
- The trip requires one or more overnight stays and/or
- A fundraising activity is required for the field trip and/or
- Require use of district funds

Trips that require significant fundraising should be presented for approval well in advance of the 45 days. The availability of funds for the trip does not ensure that the trip will be approved or conducted.

Field Trip Proposal forms shall be submitted to the appropriate school administrator 45 days in advance of the proposed trip, with time sufficient for district evaluation and approval, and for collecting executed permission slips from parents/guardians. The appropriate administrator shall evaluate each field trip proposal, and approve those that meet the criteria above.

In the event the field trip fee is greater than \$5,000 and to be paid with district funds, the district must adhere to the [BWRSD Procurement Policy](#), bidding procedures and/or competitive negotiation procedures outlined in RI Gen. Laws § 45-55-1 et seq.

The School Committee shall be notified of all field trips that involve a round trip distance of more than 400 miles and/or require more than one night of overnight stay and/or require district funds. Notification shall occur at the next regular School Committee meeting after administrative approval of the field trip as part of the Superintendent's Report.

### **Student Eligibility to Participate**

Field Trip participation may be limited by performance eligibility requirements (e.g., academic or athletic competitions) determined by the sponsoring organization, or by capacity requirements, in which case participation may be determined on a first-come, first-served basis.

### **Parent/Guardian Approval**

No student shall participate in a field trip unless, prior to the commencement of the trip, a parent/guardian of the student, executes and submits to the appropriate school administrator, the district Field Trip Permission Form, which shall include a waiver of liability, assumption of risk, release/hold harmless, and indemnification provision.

### **Transportation**

The district shall provide adequate transportation for field trips through the district budget, fundraising, or in partnership with the community, such as the PTO or other organizations. The district shall comply with applicable laws, regulations, and district policies related to the transportation of students when providing field trip transportation.

### **Supervision and Chaperones**

Students are to be under assigned adult supervision at all times during field trips. At a minimum, field trip organizers shall adhere to the staff/volunteer chaperone-to-student ratios below:

Grades PK-3, one adult for every 8 students, one of whom shall be a teacher or administrator  
Grades 4-12, one adult for every 10 students, one of whom shall be a teacher or administrator

Trips where an overnight stay will occur may require a smaller ratio of students to adults.

To the extent feasible, both male and female chaperones should be assigned to provide supervision in a variety of settings. Requests for deviations from these ratios will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the building principal and the teacher involved. The Superintendent reserves the right to require additional staff/volunteer chaperones to supervise field trips, depending on the circumstance.

Chaperones for overnight trips involving both male and female students must identify both a male and female adult chaperone before the field trip is approved.

Parent, teacher, and community chaperones may not bring additional children on the field trip and must be dedicated solely to the supervision of BWRSD students for the duration of the trip, including overnight trips.

Only volunteer chaperones who have obtained the requisite background checks and signed a waiver of liability, assumption of risk, release/hold harmless and indemnification form may be used to assist school staff on field trips. All chaperones must be reviewed and approved by the building principal. All volunteers must meet and adhere to the [BWRSD Volunteer Procedures](#).

## **Funding**

The district's annual budget shall contain an allocation of field trip funds for each school. Students and schools may also participate in fundraising and accept voluntary contributions for the purpose of supporting a school's field trip allocation, as outlined in the BWRSD policy [JJE Student Fund Raising Activities](#).

Students may be asked to pay all or part of the expenses of field trips as long as arrangements are made for the payment of trip expenses for pupils unable to do so. No student shall be ineligible to participate in a field trip on the basis of their family's ability or willingness to pay, or on their level of participation in fund-raising activities. Confidential arrangements shall be made by the appropriate principal to secure necessary funding for students in such circumstances.

## **Non-School Sponsored Tours**

The School Committee recognizes that BWRSD staff may conduct non-district sanctioned trips during vacation periods; trips on which Bristol Warren students participate. Non-sanctioned field trips organized by employees acting as independent contractors/agents involving students on a volunteer, self-supporting basis are not approved by the BWRSD School Committee and are not considered a part of the curriculum. Such travel may involve youth who are students, but it is not related to or approved in any way by the school system.

Organizers of trips by groups of students planning to travel under the auspices of an individual or non-school agency must advise parents/guardians and students in writing that the travel is neither authorized

nor sponsored by the school. Promotional literature for non-school-sponsored field trips shall contain a statement clearly indicating that the tour is not sponsored by the school or by the BWRSD School Committee. Principals should not permit recruiting of student travelers, or planning activities during regular school hours.

The school does not excuse absences for non-school-sponsored field trips. Teachers are not responsible for creating schoolwork ahead of time. Students must make up for missed academic work.

Total responsibility for privately planned field trips or tours rests with the individual(s) and agency sponsoring them. The school system bears no responsibility for travel arrangements. The district assumes no legal or financial responsibilities for non-sanctioned field trips.

References:

[RI Basic Education Program](#)

[RIGL 16-38-6 Restrictions on commercial activity and fundraising in public schools.](#)

JJE Student Fund Raising Activities

BWRSD Volunteer Procedures

Adopted: June 23, 2025

Bristol Warren Regional School District, Bristol, RI