



Capital School District

Board of Education Policy

Section: Student
Title: Field Trip Policy
Policy #: 700-04
Date Approved: 08/12/15
Date Revised: 08/06/15

Purpose:

The Board recognizes that field trips, when used for teaching and learning, provide educationally sound and important experiences that enhance the instructional programs of schools. A field trip is any planned journey for one or more students away from District premises. It is an event where the school, district sponsor, or coach is required to attend and travel with the students to the event. District athletic teams competing in interscholastic athletics are not considered part of this policy.

Field Trips and Excursions

Properly planned and executed field trips should:

- *Supplement, enrich, and extend district curriculum by providing learning experiences in an environment outside of the classroom.
- *Enhance and expand background knowledge and experiences for students in order to meet required instructional objectives.
- *Help students make connections between the school and the real world.

Guidelines for Field Trip Planning:

Plans for fieldtrips should follow the recommended actions for schools as outlined in the *Delaware Homeland Security Threat Level Guidelines*.

Field trips arranged as a reward for student contests or for general cultural betterment (i.e., concerts or performances) will be planned in a manner that limits interference with academic learning. Theme parks (e.g. Great Adventure, Hershey Park), will not be approved if scheduled during regular instructional time. Consideration will be given to groups who have an academic purpose or will be performing at these venues. Trips such as travel to the mall and cinema, in general, are not appropriate uses of instructional time.

Field trips should be distributed throughout the year rather than only taken the last weeks of school and should significantly enhance relevant curriculum topics. Field trips may be taken during school year vacations by obtaining the appropriate approvals. Only staff members employed by the District may serve as the primary sponsor and supervisor of any field trip approved by the Capital School District. These employees will hereafter be referred to in this policy as teacher/sponsor(s). No parent or officially recognized parent group such as PTA/PTO organizations, booster clubs, alumni associations, etc. may represent or sign documents obligating the District in any manner related to a field trip. Since adequate timing is necessary to secure appropriate approval and make cost-effective transportation arrangements for field trips, teacher/sponsors are encouraged to submit requests well before the policy deadlines. Professional credit for the teacher/sponsor(s) attending field trips requires advanced approval.

The approval must be in accordance with any contractual agreement or Department of Education requirements. Students are responsible for making arrangements with their teachers to make up any academic work missed while taking a field trip.

TYPES OF FIELD TRIPS

A. One Day Excursions/Local Field Trips

One day excursions include short field trips off school grounds normally taken in the general neighborhood of the school or extending within Kent County. The teacher/sponsor(s) shall review the educational value of the trip with the principal and receive the principal's and superintendent's approval prior to making any arrangements for the trip. Such requests should be submitted to the building principal at least seven days prior to the proposed trip. If there is a need for a substitute teacher or bus transportation, the request should be submitted at least two weeks before the trip.

B. In-State Field Trips

In-state field trips are those that take students beyond Kent County but within the State of Delaware. The teacher/sponsor(s) shall review the educational value of the trip with the principal and receive the principal's and superintendent's approval prior to making any arrangements for the trip. Such requests should be submitted to the building principal at least four weeks before the proposed trip. If there is a need for a substitute teacher or bus transportation, the request should be submitted five weeks before the trip.

C. Out of State, Overnight and Field Trips Abroad

Authorized field trips in this category are planned to take students out of the State of Delaware, or out of the continental USA or are trips that require students to spend at least one night away from home. The teacher/sponsor(s) shall review the educational value of the trip with the principal and receive approval of the principal, the superintendent and the Board prior to making any arrangements for the trip. The initial request should be sent to the principal at least six weeks before the trip. If there is a need for a substitute teacher, bus service transportation or another mode of transportation, the request should be submitted to the building principal at least two months before the trip.

Field trips abroad should normally have as their general purpose the fostering of language study and/or foreign culture study. The initial request to the principal to travel abroad must be accompanied by the following specific information: Dates of travel; travel agency information and commitments, necessary safety precautions, the number of additional chaperones, cost to the student including any fund raising activities, any known U.S. or international travel restrictions, and medical/immunization requirements. Upon approval, this information must be submitted to parents/guardian for their signed acknowledgment of receipt.

Field trips abroad require passports. The time and expertise needed to obtain a passport and the cost to secure a passport should all be taken into consideration to ensure equitable trip access.

FIELD TRIP RESTRICTIONS

Grades K-6

Students in grades K-4 are permitted to take field trips listed in this policy except field trips abroad. These students are limited to field trips of a maximum of three days. Field trips may be taken during vacation periods beyond the three-day period with appropriate written approvals.

Grades 7-12

Students in grades 7-12 are permitted to take field trips listed in this policy including field trips abroad. These students are limited to field trips of a maximum of seven days. Field trips may be taken during vacation periods for beyond seven days upon obtaining the appropriate written approvals.

APPROPRIATE APPROVALS

All field trips involving district students must have required prior approval before preparations are made to finalize the trip. Distribution of materials or discussions with parents and students may be necessary to determine the potential destinations and preliminary cost estimates of a trip. Teachers/sponsors shall not become involved in final preparation or activity relative to a trip, nor submit bills to, nor request partial or full trip payments from students and/or parents, until after the request has been approved. In the absence of such approval or if approval from the district will not be sought (independently sponsored trip), discussion of the field trip with parents or students may only occur if the discussion of the trip occurs outside of school property and all communications regarding the trip clearly state the trip is not sponsored or approved by the District. The District does not hold any responsibility for field trips that do not obtain the appropriate approvals.

All field trips involving students must begin with the principal's approval. The initial request should include the purpose and destination of the trip including the specific curriculum objectives, transportation request, eating arrangements, date and time of departure and return, arrangements for supervision, a detailed itinerary, cost to the student including any fund raising activities, and safety precautions.

Approval levels for each type of trip are listed below:

Type of Trip	Approvals	Approvals	Approvals
A. One Day Excursion/Local	Principal	Superintendent	
B. In-State	Principal	Superintendent	
C. Out of State, Overnight, Field Trips Abroad	Principal	Superintendent	Board of Education

The teacher/sponsor(s) will be notified of the approval or disapproval of the request and must have an approved written request before making arrangements for the trip. Once an out of state field trip is approved, teacher/sponsors must complete the "Central Directory of Group Travel" form online required by the Department of Education. Emergency requests for field trips may be submitted to the principal with a written explanation as to the exception. All exceptions must have the approval of the principal and the superintendent. The superintendent will notify the Board of Education for approval of out of state field trips. Whenever it is determined that the health, safety or welfare of those who are traveling might be adversely affected, the principal, the

superintendent, or the Board reserves the right to withdraw approval for the trip. The District will assume no liability to anyone for reimbursement of any costs or expenses incurred by any trip for which the principal, superintendent or Board withdraws its approval.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN PERMISSION

A parental permission slip must be sought and obtained for each individual trip before any student leaves the school building on a trip. Parental permission shall include consent from parents to arrange for necessary medical treatment. The teacher/sponsor(s) shall provide the parents and guardians with information concerning the purpose and destination of the trip, transportation and eating arrangements, date and time of departure, estimated time of return, arrangements for supervision, cost to the student, safety precautions if high risk activity is involved and a detailed itinerary when the field trip will extend beyond the school day.

Teacher/sponsors should inform parents in advance about the recommended amount of spending money, if any, each student needs. Special provisions may be required when seeking permission from parents if language, literacy or cultural barriers exist. For school activities that involve more than one trip outside the boundaries of the school such as swimming lessons, outdoor education classes and sports activities, a single parental permission will suffice if the information to the parent includes a schedule of all activities. Should any of these activities change, separate field trip parental permissions must be obtained. A single parental permission will suffice for scheduled and unscheduled walking field trips in the neighborhood of the school.

SAFETY

Student safety shall be a primary consideration. It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that suitable supervision and safety measures are provided in the initial request. The teacher/sponsor(s) is responsible for being familiar with and conducting a safety assessment of the proposed site of the field trip. Each trip must be properly monitored and supervised (See Adult Supervision.) Some field trips, such as those involving activities on, in, or near water, rock climbing, street and highway cycling, skiing, and hiking are classified as high risk student excursions/field trips requiring additional safety precautionary measures. Where the principal deems it appropriate or where it is required by law, supervision shall include individuals suitably trained in first aid. A detailed approved, itemized itinerary and final roster of participants must be left on file in the school office along with a list of addresses and telephone number where students and adults on the trip may be reached in case of an emergency. Planned, non-supervised time on field trips is not permitted. Chaperones must assume responsibility for students at all times throughout the trip. A teacher/sponsor shall not change an approved itinerary while the trip is in progress, except where the health, safety or welfare of the students in his/her charge is imperiled or where changes or substitutions beyond his/her control have frustrated the purpose of the trip. If there is any necessary deviation from the approved itinerary and/or time schedule, affecting either the entire group or any member of the group, the teacher/sponsor(s) in charge should use a predetermined system for notifying parents and the building principal of the change. Prior to participating in the field trip, staff should review with students the conduct standards and emergency procedures that provide for their safety. Student behavior while on all field trips must comply with the Student Success Guide and all other rules, policies, and procedures set forth by each school. Parents should be informed of rules and regulations and any consequences of infraction of rules should be clearly explained. Parents may be required to come to the field trip site and remove their child if significant issues are apparent relating to behavior, health or safety. The signed permission form should contain a statement of understanding and acceptance of rules by a parent and the student. Permission forms for any trip should include authorization to obtain

emergency medical care and pertinent insurance information, such as name of carrier and identification numbers. In the event of an emergency situation, the teacher/sponsor(s) is responsible for notifying the principal by telephone as soon as possible.

ADULT SUPERVISION

Teachers, adult chaperones or parents should be assigned to assist the teacher/sponsor(s) at a minimum of one adult to eight students for elementary, one adult to twelve students for middle school (5-8) and one adult to fifteen students for high school. When activities involve local trips, i.e., other district schools, local library, courthouse, etc., no fewer than two chaperones per class are required. Chaperones are limited to parents/guardians of students, grandparents, student-teachers or other related adults if approved by the principal. Additional children, other than those enrolled in the school, will not be permitted. Chaperones' responsibilities include securing his/her specific assignments from the teacher/sponsor(s). Seats on a bus or the expense of the trip may limit the number of chaperones who can attend the activity. Additional chaperones who want to attend the activity but who do not have a transportation slot may provide their own transportation if admission space at the field trip allows.

TRIP ACCESSIBILITY

Normally, students will be responsible for paying their own fees for participation in field trips. However, teacher/sponsor(s) should not plan field trips that might exclude or deny a member of the class or group from participation due to economic reasons nor shall they be penalized academically for nonparticipation. The principal, in consultation with the teacher/sponsor, and parent may exclude a child from participating in a field trip for documented school academic or behavior violations. If the participation in a fieldtrip is contingent or conditional on behavior, this should be communicated in advance to the parent and student. The child will be provided with a program of study while remaining in school.

FUND RAISING

Field trips should be announced as soon after approval as possible so that long-range financial planning on the part of all students may take place. The teacher/sponsor should decide whether a fund raising activity is necessary to accommodate the financial needs of the students in the class. Annual or traditional fund raising projects by booster, class or club organizations which may be scheduled prior to the provisions above may continue to be conducted, and funds raised by those projects may be utilized to defer total trip or individual student trip costs for approved trips in accordance with normal procedures of those organizations. All teachers are required to follow the procedures outlined in the Internal Account Policy (300-12) for the handling of all funds related to fieldtrips.

AGREEMENTS WITH TRAVEL OR OTHER OUTSIDE AGENCIES

The building principal and superintendent must approve all agreements. The travel agency should be provided a copy of the District's travel policy. All agreements should provide the following information:

1. Cost breakdown per person
2. Travel company's responsibilities
3. Listing of fees paid by the travel company
4. Listing of free trips or gifts made to individuals, groups, or schools provided by the travel company
5. Provisions for refund and cancellation (required for agreement)

6. Dates of deadlines clearly defined

TRANSPORTATION

In most cases, district-owned buses, contracted buses, or district vans will be used for approved field trips. Information from the transportation supervisor such as agreed upon rates for various zone areas should be referenced. Only approved District employees may drive District vehicles. Only those vehicles approved by the state for transportation of students may be used. Requests for field trips requiring District vehicles or other contractual modes of transportation must be submitted in a timely manner using the appropriate transportation request procedures. Students are expected to travel to and from the field trip with the teacher/sponsor(s) responsible for the trip. Student travel by any other means is discouraged. Students will not be permitted to leave the field trip group during the trip. Parents/guardians desiring to take their children home before a field trip ends (i.e. at the end of a game, or concert) must submit a note to the teacher/sponsor in advance of the trip about such arrangements. The Board assumes no liability for students who are for any reason transported by parents or in private cars. Student drivers are not permitted to transport other students in personal vehicles on school-sponsored field trips. Students may travel with another student's parent provided written permission is on file with the event sponsor. When a small group of students is involved, teacher/sponsor(s) should avoid using personal vehicles unless there is an emergency and they have the approval of the principal and written permission of the parent. Any time personal vehicles are used to transport students, the vehicle owner's coverage is the primary coverage.