

<u>Section I:</u> Instructional Goals and Objectives	Knox County Board of Education Policy		
	Descriptor Term: Off-Campus Trips	Descriptor Code:	Issued:
		I-250	7/95
		Reviewed:	Revised:
9/25	11/21		

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The Board recognizes that student off-campus trips are sometimes justified for the purpose of achieving the established educational goals of the school system. To safeguard the Board, its employees, and students in matters of liability, all off-campus trips must be approved in advance by the Director of Schools. Approval shall be contingent upon evidence that the trip is justified and planned according to the provisions in this policy.

All field trips must receive prior approval from the school principal before being forwarded to the Director of Schools. It is the responsibility of the principal to recommend field trips for approval ten (10) school days prior to the proposed date.

JUSTIFICATION

Personnel arranging or approving a trip should have evidence that the experience will enhance the achievement of established program objectives, and that the anticipated educational benefits of the trip will justify the financial costs and the impact upon other school programs.

It is the responsibility of the principal to approve field trips only after the educational justification and plans for any students not attending have been determined.

APPROVAL

Written prior approval is required for all off-campus trips, both curricular and extra-curricular. Approval must be obtained regardless of day of the week or time of day, and regardless of whether the event originates in a school, in the central office, or in an outside agency. The approval procedure for regular trips differs from the procedure for special trips, as described hereafter.

1. **Regular trips**, made on a scheduled basis and integral to the ongoing operation of an authorized program, receive blanket approval of the Director of Schools and Board when program guidelines, budgets, and schedules are approved. Examples of regular trips are the travel of interscholastic athletic teams on an approved schedule and the transporting of vocational classes to training sites on a routine basis. Requests for approval of such guidelines, budgets and schedules will be made by program administrators by letter or forms specified for the program involved.
2. **Special trips** include one-time trips and any others not receiving blanket approval as regular trips as described in item #1. Requests for approval of special trips must utilize the official **Off-Campus Trip Approval** form. Channels for approval will include the principal, the appropriate supervisor, the Director of Schools. Special trips may not be scheduled during school hours within the final five (5) days of the school year.

Public announcements regarding planned field trips or receipt of field trip monies are not to be initiated with students until the principal has been notified by the appropriate Central Office supervisor authorizing the field trip request.

PLANNING

Advanced provisions must be made for safety and educational factors, including but not necessarily limited to the following items:

1. written permission of parents
2. the safety of participants
3. adult supervision
4. activities for achieving definite educational objectives
5. student orientation and follow-up critique
6. transportation
7. financial obligations
8. instruction and supervision of students not taking the trip

Requests for approval of field trips must be submitted to the principal on a Field Trip Request Form accompanied by a Field Trip Risk Assessment Form.

OUT-OF-COUNTY FIELD TRIPS

Requests for out-of-county field trips must include required forms for field trips, including the **Field Trip Risk Assessment Form**. Out-of-County and Out-of-State field trips require the appropriate supervisor's approval and must be submitted in a timely manner for this to occur before any financial commitments are made.

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CONSENT

Prior to a scheduled field trip, it will be the responsibility of the supervising teacher to have signed parent/legal guardian permission forms on file for all participating students in the school office along with the name of the teacher supervising the trip. The departure time and return time must be clearly stated on the permission form and conveyed to students, parents, and school administration.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION/FEE WAIVER REQUESTS/SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

A student with an approved fee waiver who is eligible to participate in a regular field trip may not be excluded due to inability to pay his/her portion of the trip. Accommodations for students with disabilities shall be provided (i.e., special assistance, transportation, accessibility at site).

SUPERVISION

A certificated Knox County Schools employee must accompany students on any approved trip. Any violations of school rules and/or district policies shall be reported to the principal. Adult-to-student ratios may vary but must be adequate for the field trip activity and the number and age of the students. Teachers who accompany students on field trips may request a substitute if: a) they will be away from school a major portion of the day and/or b) the majority of their students will remain at school.

Non-certificated chaperones shall be 21 years of age or older. The certificated district employee will provide the chaperones with specific information regarding their responsibilities. Chaperones shall be responsible for the continuous monitoring of student activities. Knox County personnel and chaperones shall not consume alcoholic beverages, smoke, or use illegal substances while accompanying and supervising students on field trips. Supervisors/chaperones will model the same behavior as expected on school property.

- 1 • Student roll call will be taken before leaving school and again before departing the visitation site.
2 If any student is missing or injured, the student's parent/legal guardian will be contacted
3 immediately. One district employee will remain until the absent student or his/her parent/legal
4 guardian arrives at the site.
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- 6 • When trips are scheduled to return after regular school hours, a certificated district employee must
7 supervise students after returning to campus. No students are to be left at the school unsupervised.
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- 9 • In the event a student is not picked up within one (1) hour of the scheduled arrival time, the
10 supervising teacher will do the following:
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 - 12 – Telephone the parent/legal guardian and stay with the student until the student's transportation
13 arrives.
 - 14 – If the parent/legal guardian cannot be contacted and all other resources are exhausted, the
15 police department may be called to assist.
 - 16 – In the event of unforeseen circumstances of a significant delay in return time, the supervising
17 teacher **must** contact the appropriate administrator immediately.
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19 **STUDENT FOREIGN TRAVEL/STUDY PROGRAMS**

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21 Knox County Schools will not approve foreign travel. Any student or teacher who takes part in foreign
22 travel or foreign study will do so of their own accord through an outside agency.
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24 Students who participate in a foreign travel/study program do so as an enrichment activity. KCS will not
25 award credit for foreign travel or study programs.
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27 **FOOD AND BEVERAGE PROVISIONS/MANDATED LUNCH PROGRAM**

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29 All students eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch must be provided with a lunch when on a field trip
30 that occurs during the regular lunch period. School cafeteria managers shall be notified in advance if a
31 specific number of students will be participating on a field trip during the regular lunch period.
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33 **FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

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35 The cost of the field trip will be a factor in the decision to approve the field trip. A statement of projected
36 costs and fees to be charged for admission, transportation, etc. must be included in the field trip request.
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38 Field trip expenses incurred by adult sponsors/chaperones should be included in determining the overall
39 cost for the field trip; however, no profits shall be realized in excess of the cost of the trip.
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41 Collection logs, payments, and receipts must be maintained in accordance with internal school uniform
42 accounting procedures.
43

44 **TRANSPORTATION**

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46 Parents shall assume responsibility for providing transportation for the children on off-campus trips unless
47 transportation is specifically arranged by the school. When the school arranges transportation, it must
48 utilize state-inspected school buses or commercial carriers except when the number of students does not
49 warrant the expense, in which cases privately-owned vehicles may be used. When students pay the cost
50 of a bus, a commercial carrier, or a privately-owned vehicle arranged by the school, the rate shall be

1 negotiated by the owner and the principal. Regardless of who arranges the transportation – parent or
2 school – liability coverage is the responsibility of owners and drivers, as the Board does not provide
3 liability coverage except for Knox County-owned vehicles.
4

5 When school buses are used, principals are encouraged to use the buses which normally serve within the
6 high school attendance zone involved, subject to cost and satisfactory service considerations. Bus rules
7 must be obeyed. If any items are to be taken on the bus, they must be safely secured. The rear door must
8 be clear at all times. The bus owner and/or the driver are responsible for enforcing this policy. The safety
9 of the students while on the bus is a joint responsibility of the professional staff, the chaperones and the
10 bus driver. The bus driver's primary responsibility is for providing a safe transportation method for
11 students during the field trip. Once the students are off the bus, their conduct becomes the responsibility
12 of the professional staff and chaperones. Off-campus trips to an out-of-county location or to a location
13 that is greater than thirty (30) miles one way, whichever is the greater distance, shall have no more than
14 two persons per seat for middle and high school students and three persons per seat for grades
15 kindergarten through five.
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17 **LEASING OR RENTAL OF VEHICLES**

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19 Employees are not authorized to lease or rent any vehicle to transport students without prior authorization
20 from the Director of Schools. Procurement procedures determined by the Knox County
21 Purchasing Department shall be followed when school funds are used to pay for an approved lease or
22 rental of a vehicle.
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24 **DRIVER DESIGNATION**

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26 Service providers shall submit in writing to the Transportation Department and building level
27 administrator, or designee, the driver's name and driver identification number for all services originating
28 at the building level.
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30 When the school arranges for private cars to be used, the employee arranging the trip must inform drivers
31 of their personal liability prior to listing their names on the approval form. Knox County Schools
32 discourages students from driving to field trip events; however, in unique circumstances (as deemed by
33 the principal), students may drive if they hold an Intermediate Unrestricted License or a Regular Driver's
34 License. If other students ride with a student, the student driver must have the following on file: a regular
35 driver's license, proof of insurance, and a written parental permission to transport other students. Students
36 who ride with another student must have written parental permission, including contact information.
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38 Parents who transport students on field trips must provide proof of insurance to the principal. A copy of
39 such must be on file in the principal's office.
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41 **USAGE OF VANS**

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43 Vehicles designed to transport more than ten (10) passengers, including the driver, shall meet school bus
44 structural standards. Van type vehicles shall not be used for transporting students for instructional off-
45 campus trips, athletic events, and other school approved functions.
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LIABILITY

The Knox County Board of Education does not endorse, support, or assume liability in any way for any staff member who takes students on field trips not approved by the Board, the Director of Schools, and/or the principal.

PUBLIC LAW 93-113, SECTION 504

Under this federal law, no student may be deprived of an off-campus trip on the basis of handicap. The principal approving the trip shall ascertain that the appropriate accommodations have been made.

NON-DISTRICT SPONSORED/BOARD-APPROVED STUDENT TRIPS

Activities sponsored by non-Knox County Schools organizations, which recruit Knox County Schools students, and/or teachers to participate are neither approved nor endorsed by Knox County Schools.

- Teachers and school officials are prohibited from using their position to enlist students for a non-approved activity. Teacher and school officials are prohibited from soliciting student participation or collecting student payments during school hours for non-approved activities.
- A teacher's communication with students and/or parents regarding unofficial field trips must be independent of the school and of the teacher's employment. A teacher may not utilize the time, facilities, equipment or supplies of the district to communicate with students and/or parents regarding unofficial field trips, unless he or she follows Use-of-Facilities procedures.
- Field trips organized by individual teachers must clearly be identified as non-school sponsored activities to avoid district liability.

Approved as to Legal Form
By Knox County Law Director 9/22/2021
/Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director