EASTCONN
Where Learning Comes to Life

STUDENTS
Series 5000
Policy #5009.1.1

Field Trips

The EASTCONN Board of Directors recognizes that field trips for students when properly planned, executed, evaluated, and used as a device for teaching and learning, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of EASTCONN.

For purposes of this policy, a field trip is defined as any journey by a group of students away from the school premises, under the supervision of a teacher, which is an integral part of an approved course of study, co-curricular activity or class trip and conducted for the purpose of affording a first-hand educational experience not available in the classroom or school.

The value of field trips is directly related to the orientation and preparation of the students by their teacher(s) prior to the trip and the care with which the teacher(s) uses follow-up activities upon the student's return.

Types of Field Trips

EASTCONN recognizes the following types of field trips:

1. **School Sponsored Educational Field Trips**

   School sponsored educational field trips should be directly related to or be an extension of classroom learning experiences. Pre-teaching, planning, and evaluation should always be part of any given field trip. This category of trips includes competitive/performance field trips by academic, athletic, (excluding regularly scheduled interscholastic athletic contests) and performing art teams participating in competition or performance.

2. **School Sponsored Recreational Field Trips**

   School groups may plan trips for recreational purposes. They are subject to final approval of the Building Principal and the EASTCONN Board of Directors (if necessary). Participation may be limited to the members of the sponsoring organization. Such trips are offered on a voluntary basis and are designed as a social activity. Overnight recreational field trips are prohibited.

3. **School Sponsored Cultural/Enrichment Field Trips**

School groups may plan trips for cultural/enrichment purposes. They are subject to final approval of the Building Principal and the EASTCONN Board of Directors , if necessary (see Approval of Field Trips).

4. Trips Unrelated to the Agency

The EASTCONN Board of Directors cannot accept responsibility for non-school sponsored trips/tours. Individuals who plan trips/tours that are not school sponsored must alert parents and students that the planned trip is not associated with EASTCONN Public Schools. The trip planners must clearly indicate in writing that they are serving as private agents or private individuals. The preparation for non-school sponsored trips shall not take place during school hours. No school materials may be used for letters to parents, directions or other communications.

Approvals of Field Trips

All school sponsored field trips require administrative approval.

- For all trips within the State of Connecticut, requests must be submitted to the building administrator 30 days in advance of the departure date. Costs must be ascertained.

- All out-of-state field trips require the approval of the EASTCONN Executive Director 60 days in advance of the departure date.

- All foreign travel field trips must be submitted for the EASTCONN Board of Directors approval 90 days in advance of the departure date.

- The EASTCONN Executive Director approval of all field trips shall be conditional. Approval for any field trip may be revoked at any time by the EASTCONN Executive Director or Building Principal if a change in circumstances, whether man-made or natural, would warrant cancellation in the interest of safety of the students or staff.

- Parents/guardians are responsible for obtaining trip cancellation insurance. The EASTCONN Board of Directors is not responsible to refund students for cancelled trips or to pursue reimbursement from travel agents or trip insurance carriers, under any circumstances.

Optional Considerations:

- Any trips involving swimming must receive special approval from the EASTCONN Executive Director.

- Parents/guardians who feel their child should not participate may deny permission and arrangements will be made for the child to remain at school on the day of the trip.

- Each field trip should be evaluated by students, teachers and administration.

- Use of privately owned vehicles or leased vans to transport students to and from field trips is strictly prohibited, except in the case of a bona fide emergency. Determination of a bona fide emergency will be made by the field trip leader if the EASTCONN Executive Director or Principal is not present or available or not possible to contact. Staff and parents/guardians who use their own vehicles risk being legally liable for any injury a student sustains while in the vehicle.

- Chaperons on school sponsored trips will be covered for liability purposes by the EASTCONN school and Agency policies.

- The administration reserve the right to deny the participation for any student on any overnight field trip based upon a record of inappropriate behavior and/or poor attendance pattern.

Costs of Field Trips

Students may be assessed for the cost of field trips which includes transportation, lodging, meals, and entry fees. Fund raising activities (following EASTCONN policies) may be used to defray the cost of a field trip. When the cost is considerable, a discreet arrangement can be made with the administrator for the possible assistance in payment for those individuals experiencing a hardship. Parents/guardians of students on the free and reduced lunch program should contact the administrator.

Additional Considerations

This policy does not apply to regular interscholastic athletic games/competitions, as that schedule is developed by the Athletic Director in conjunction with the administration. Any trips by athletic teams beyond the regular interscholastic schedule must be approved in accordance with this policy.

The EASTCONN Board of Directors may require a follow up review of any field trip at an Executive Committee Board meeting, at the discretion of the Chairperson.

The acceptance of any gratuities, discounts and/or gifts for personal use resulting from field trips is prohibited. Any gifts, gratuities, or promotional items provided by travel companies will become the property of EASTCONN and will be used for the benefit of the trip or the school.

The EASTCONN Executive Director shall establish regulations/procedures for the review and approval of field trips. These procedures shall address the process for prior screening, evaluating and approving field trips. All reasonable steps are to be taken to ensure the safety of participants. Additionally, the procedures should require prior Building Principal approval of all field trips, and prior approval of the EASTCONN Executive Director. Furthermore, the procedures shall establish assurances that:

- All students up to age 18 have parental/guardian permission for trips

- All trips are properly supervised, all safety precautions are observed
- All trips contribute substantially to the educational program
- All trips are funded by EASTCONN (or funding is addressed in the planning)
- All safety precautions are observed

The administration reserve the right to deny the participation for any student on any overnight field trip based upon a record of inappropriate behavior and/or poor attendance pattern.

(cf. 5001.1.1 - Administration of Medications)

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