

SCHOOL-SPONSORED FIELD TRIPS

The Hull School Committee recognizes that it is desirable, on occasion, to supplement and extend classroom activities with voluntary domestic and international field trips to broaden educational experiences of students. The Superintendent shall be informed of all field trips.

A. CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

Field trips meeting the following criteria may be permitted and encouraged. Depending on circumstances, other criteria may be applicable. The trip shall:

1. be relevant to the course of study and program;
2. provide learning experiences, which cannot be provided in the local school setting;
3. be appropriate for the age group involved in the activity;
4. be reasonable in terms of time, distance and cost;
5. be planned with careful consideration of student safety, which includes without limitation an appropriate number of adult chaperones, CORI and SORI checks on chaperones or other volunteers and assurance that the selected transportation carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration with "satisfactory" safety rating;
6. assure that no student is denied the opportunity to participate in a field trip because of the inability to pay; and
7. be voluntary.

B. AUTHORITY TO APPROVE/DISAPPROVE

1. All school-sponsored day in-state field trips must receive the prior approval of the principal.
2. All school-sponsored day out-of-state field trips must be approved by the Principal, the Superintendent and the School Committee.
3. All school-sponsored late night or overnight field trips (in- or out-of-state) must be approved by the principal, Superintendent and School Committee. Late night travel is defined as travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m.
4. All school-sponsored international field trips must be approved by the principal, Superintendent and School Committee.
5. The approval process shall be completed prior to engaging students in fundraising activities or other preparations for the trip including soliciting students or other promotional activities.
6. The School Committee reserves the right (a) to cancel trips up to departure and (b) to recall trips in progress, if they believe there is potential danger to students or any other reason deemed appropriate by the School Committee.
7. In the event that the School Committee must cancel or recall a trip due to safety concerns or other reason, the Superintendent will alert the School Committee to final deadlines regarding required commitment of funds for School Committee review.
8. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.
9. Teachers and other school staff should be prohibited from soliciting privately run trips through the school system. The trip approval process should apply only to school-sanctioned trips; School Committees should not approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

10. Policies and procedures for trip approval should take into account all logistical details involving transportation, accommodations, fundraising required of students, and the educational value of the trip in relation to its costs.

C. APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION

Approval for all trips must be received prior to making any financial contractual arrangements. All field trips must be approved in writing by the appropriate authority as specified in this policy. The initial documentation to request a field trip must include:

1. The purpose of the trip including a mapping to the curriculum.
2. Proposed dates.
3. Proposed itinerary.
4. A description of the process that will be used to determine student eligibility.
5. Estimated number of students expected.
6. Cost per student (if applicable).
7. Mode of transportation and schedule.
8. Proposed method of securing sufficient chaperones is to be supplied. Students shall be accompanied by a sufficient number of chaperones, taking into account the trip scheduling and logistics. All chaperones, including parents and volunteers, must have a CORI and SORI check in accordance with M.G.L. c.71s.38r. Unless otherwise waived or excused, the recommended ration of chaperones/teachers to students is as follows: (Recommended ratio – HS 1:10 min. domestic, 1:6 international; MS 1:10 min.; Elementary 1:10 min.)
9. Description of arrangements for meals and lodging (if applicable).
10. Means of financing.
11. A draft copy of any contract and refund policies associated with the trip.
12. A draft copy of the letters to be sent to parents and guardians explaining the specifics of the trip including all of the above and any rules specific to the trip which are in addition to the District student conduct policies or student handbook rules or regulation.
13. A description of the educational alternative and mapping of that alternative for students not attending the trip.

FURTHER DOCUMENTATION

1. A satisfactory Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check as well as a satisfactory check of the National Sex Offender Registry (SORI) is required of all chaperones.
2. Additional information may be requested from the appropriate authority prior to making a decision and/or at any time.
3. Should external circumstances change after the initial trip approval detailed modifications to the relevant approval documentation (see above) will be required.

D. DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS AND FIELD TRIPS

1. All Policies on Student Behavior, Student Handbook rules and regulations, and trip rules as specified in Section C.13 regarding student conduct will apply to all field trips.
2. If a student violates any student conduct policies, Student Handbook rules or regulations, trip rules as specified in Section C.13, or otherwise misbehaves while on a field trip, the student will be immediately suspended from the field trip and sent back to school or home as appropriate.
3. Policies on Student Behavior, Student Handbook rules and regulations, and trip rules as specified in Section C.13 regarding student conduct will be given to chaperones. Chaperones shall agree to implement and enforce them.

E. HEALTH POLICIES

1. In accordance with the Hull School Committee Policy on Administering Medicines to Students (JLCD), the administration of medications while on a day field trip is discouraged if medically feasible. However, in the event that it is medically necessary for a student to be administered medication while on a field trip the procedures promulgated in the Policy on Administering Medicines to Students will apply. *Parents/legal guardians will receive a copy of the Policy JLCD – Administering Medicines to Students - in advance of the field trip as part of the trip materials.*
2. Up to date medical form is completed.

F. TRANSPORTATION AND SCHEDULING

1. The use of private vans and automobiles for trips planned to include late night (travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m.) or overnight student travel must comply with policy EEAG – Student transportation in private vehicles. Such trips should generally use commercial motor coaches.
2. Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, the trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m.
3. Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered "optional school programs" and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements under 603 CMR 27.00. However, academic field trips may be considered structured learning time (see the Department's Student Learning Time Regulations Guide). School districts may consider travel for field trips as included in students' schedules, but the Department recommends that schools consider scheduling additional structured learning time when significant travel time is anticipated (i.e., time outside the hours of the regular school day).
4. School officials should ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district should not contract with any carrier that has an FMCSA safety rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory." FMCSA carrier ratings are available at <http://www.saferys.org/>.
5. If school officials are unable to conduct their own in-depth reviews of bus carrier qualifications they may elect to use ratings and prequalifications established by other public entities, such as the Department of Defense's approved list of motor carriers for troop transport (<http://www.mtmc.army.mil/content/504/approvedlist.pdf>).
6. Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.
7. If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

G. CONSENT and RELEASE FORM

Any student going on a school sponsored field trip must submit a properly completed and signed FIELD TRIP CONSENT and RELEASE FORM (see attached copy). This form must be signed by the student's parent or legal guardian. The consent form will include a section in which parents/legal guardians will be required to affirm and record that they have read the Field Trip Emergency Consent and Release Form and they understand the contents of the form. By signing the form, the parent/legal guardian will affirm that he/she/they have decided to allow the child to participate in the school-sponsored field trip with full knowledge that

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1. the School Committee reserves the right to cancel a trip up to the departure date or to recall a trip in progress due to safety concerns or any other reason deemed appropriate by the School Committee and
2. he/she/they may lose any and/or all of the funds he/she/they have expended for the voluntary trip.

In the event that the School Committee must cancel or recall a trip due to safety concerns or other reason, the Superintendent will alert the School Committee to final deadlines regarding commitment of funds for School Committee review.

H. INTERNATIONAL FIELD TRIPS

The District may sponsor international field trips. All school-sponsored international field trips must be approved by the Principal, Superintendent, and School Committee in accordance with the specifics (A-G) set forth in this policy.

I. FUNDRAISING

1. The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students' obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.
2. Group fundraising activities are preferred. If students are charged individual fees for participation, the district should make every effort to provide scholarships where needed.

The Hull Public School District shall be held harmless from any claims, suits, liabilities, causes of action or responsibility of any type for any accidents, injuries or death connected with this policy. Parents/Guardians and student must sign the PARENT/STUDENT CONSENT RELEASE FROM LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT - File: BBC as presented in the Hull Public Schools Policy Manual.

Cross Ref: School Committee Policy JJE

Additional Useful Resources:

1. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov>
2. United Motorcoach Association - Student Motorcoach Travel Safety Guide (includes "Motorcoach Safety Checklist") <http://www.uma.org/consumerhelp/studentguide.asp>

Legal References: Massachusetts Department of Education Regulations 603 CMR 27.00
Time on Learning, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71§ 37M and N,
Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71§38R.

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