

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

The Board of Education recognizes that field trips for educational purposes are an important part of the school curriculum. Field trips may be an integral part of the regular educational program, a supplement to the regular educational program or part of an extracurricular school program.

The Building Principals will approve the frequency and content of class field trips. Each student must secure the permission of his/her parent or guardian before participating in such activity.

District-wide field trips will be the shared responsibility of teachers and building principals. Building principals shall be responsible for approving all walking field trips. The approval of the Superintendent of Schools shall be required for all other field trips. Superintendent approval should be obtained on the completed request form at least 10 school days prior to the event. Each student must secure the permission of his/her parent or guardian before participating in such activity.

Prior to making any field trip commitments and/or reservations, all requests for field trips must be submitted to and approved by the appropriate building principal and the Superintendent. Factors relevant in consideration of approval of such trips should include the relationship to the curriculum, availability of transportation, the cost involved, weather conditions, and a detailed description of the responsibilities of staff and chaperones relating to adequate supervision while on the field trip.

The school district assumes no responsibility or liability for trips planned without having received the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools or Board of Education, as appropriate. Without prior approval, these trips are considered non-school sponsored trips, and the school district's liability insurance will not cover the students, staff members or other individuals chaperoning or accompanying the trip. The organizer(s) of any non-school sponsored trip shall assume all responsibility and liability and shall indemnify and hold harmless the Kingston City School District, its officers, employees and agents, from and against any claim, suit, demand, action, judgment, cost, expense and liability, including the costs of defense of any such claim, including reasonable attorney's fees, which may arise or result, directly or indirectly, from the planning or operation of a trip without such prior approval. In September, this policy, or a plain language summary thereof, shall be distributed to all staff members by their building principal. The Superintendent is charged with the enforcement of this policy, and will take appropriate disciplinary action for non-compliance, if needed.

Funding of educational field trips that are an integral part of an approved course of study will be based upon available funds from the budget of the individual school, the department or sponsoring organization. Students and chaperones may be asked to bear the full or partial cost of such trips such as costs related to transportation, food, lodging or admissions. No student will be denied permission to participate for failure to contribute.

Funding associated with extracurricular field trips, trips that are designed as an enrichment to the course of study, may be paid by students, sponsoring organizations, fund raising activities and/or through donations.

At a minimum, student conduct on field trips shall be governed by Board of Education policies 5300 and 5305 on student conduct. Additional rules for student conduct on a particular field trip may be announced in advance by the building principal and/or the participating teacher.

If a field trip occurs during the school day, students who do not participate will be expected to be in school and will be assigned appropriate work for the day(s).

Appropriate adult supervision is essential for all field trips. It is recognized that the adult/student ratio required may vary based on the age of the students and the nature and destination of the trip. The appropriate ratio for each trip will be determined by the building principal in conjunction with the sponsoring teacher/agency subject to the following guidelines. At the elementary level, field trips involving a relocation of classroom setting into a self-contained (i.e., UPAC, Women's Studio Workshop, Kingston High School) would require a minimum of 15:1 ratio. Field trips not to a self-contained environment would require a minimum of 10:1 ratio. At the secondary level, field trips involving a relocation of classroom setting into a self-contained environment (i.e., Women's Studio Workshop) would require a minimum of 20:1 ratio. Field trips not to a self-contained environment would require a minimum of 15:1. A more stringent ratio may be required by the building principal and/or department chair given the specific nature of the field trip. Final approval will be at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Employees chaperoning field trips and volunteer chaperones may not receive consideration from private sources, booster clubs or extracurricular organizations beyond the expenses related to the field trip.

Trips organized by groups or individuals separate from Kingston City School District curricular, supplemental or extracurricular programs may not be planned for any time during school hours or on school district property. Travel by employees as chaperones for non-school groups will not be allowed on scheduled or rescheduled school days.

Return Transportation

When the district provides transportation to students on a school-sponsored field trip, extracurricular activity or any other similar event, it shall provide transportation back to either the point of departure or to the appropriate school in the district unless:

1. the parent or legal guardian of a student participating in such event has provided the district with a written notice authorizing an alternative form of return transportation for the student; or
2. intervening circumstances make such transportation impractical.

Where intervening circumstances (e.g., injury to the student or other good cause) have made transportation back to the point of departure or to the appropriate school in the district

impractical, a representative of the district shall remain with the student until such student's parent or legal guardian has been contacted and the student has been delivered to his/her parent or legal guardian.

Whenever a parent or legal guardian desires to have an alternative form of return transportation, the parent's prior written request or a written request made at the event site before school buses begin to depart from the event, shall specify the mode of transportation and the person who will be responsible for transporting their child.

Cross Ref: Policy 1250 School Volunteers

Ref: Education Law §§1604; 1709; 1804; 1903; 2503; 2554; 2590-e

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