

Regulation: Field Trips

The primary purpose of field trips in Mapleton is to provide opportunities for learning that enrich and reinforce classroom learning objectives. Field trips are intended to be extensions of the District's educational program, not solely for entertainment or as a reward for student behavior or academic performance. To ensure compliance with these goals, educational field trips shall be planned and conducted in accordance with the following guidelines and policy IJOA.

Preliminary Planning

1. All field trips must be planned by the teacher(s) in consultation with the school director. The school director must approve of the field trip prior to any arrangements being made.
2. All field trips must relate to District learning goals and objectives. In planning a field trip, the teacher(s) shall review the educational value of the experience and its relationship to District learning goals and objectives with the school director.
3. No field trip may endanger the health or safety of the participants. The school director shall not approve any field trip that may present a health risk to students or staff (e.g. a visit to a superfund site designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) such as the Rocky Flats Industrial Park).
4. The school director shall ensure that a variety of field trips are offered from year to year, to avoid students repeating the same experiences year after year.
5. Once the teacher receives approval from the school director, the teacher must secure permission for the field trip from designated representatives of the agency to be visited. In addition, the teacher should obtain information from the agency about the safety of the experience, including: any hazards which could be encountered, recommended student/adult ratios, and expected behavior and dress standards. The teacher should also inquire about fees associated with the field trip.

Field Trip Request Form

1. After obtaining the approval of the school director, permission from the agency, and all necessary information about the field trip, the teacher shall complete a field trip request form and a transportation request (if applicable). The school director must approve and sign the field trip request form before any other arrangements are made. If more than one school is involved in the trip, each school director must initial the request form to indicate approval.

2. Trips outside of the Denver metropolitan area must be approved by the Superintendent (or designee) and the Risk Manager, who shall ensure that adequate insurance has been secured.
3. Any overnight trip, trips exceeding 200 miles round trip, and/or trips outside of the state of Colorado must additionally be approved by the Board of Education.

School Bus Transportation

1. Once the field trip request form has been approved by all necessary District personnel, the teacher and the school director shall ensure that the transportation request form is received by the appropriate transportation official.
2. Bus transportation will be made available on a first-come, first-serve basis, and is only available between the hours of 9:15 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Returns to the District can be scheduled after 4:30 p.m. if arrangements have been made for students returning to their homes (exceptions may be made for sporting events).
3. The Transportation Department assumes, upon receipt of a request for transportation, that the teacher has confirmed the date, times, and drop-off/pick-up location with the agency to be visited.
4. The Transportation Department will send an email confirmation indicating bus availability. The teacher should contact the Transportation Department if confirmation has not been received three days prior to the date of the requested trip.

Other Forms of Transportation

1. Teachers may take students on educational field trips within reasonable walking distance of the school with approval of the school director. Walking field trips must include an appropriate number of adults to ensure all students are safe along the walk. Parents shall be notified that the students will be walking and asked to ensure the student wears appropriate footwear.
2. In order to utilize regional transportation district (RTD) buses, arrangements must be made between the school and the company directly. The school is responsible for payment. Parents must grant permission for the student to utilize public transportation. Students must remain with a teacher or adult volunteer during the entire trip.
3. Staff members may obtain special permission to transport students in private vehicles in accordance with policy EEAG: Student Transportation in Private Vehicles. Parents/adult volunteers shall not transport students in private vehicles

without express permission from the Superintendent (or designee) for the specific trip and if permission is granted, shall comply with all District policies and regulations that apply to staff members transporting students. Anyone granted permission to transport students in a private vehicle must also obtain written permission from each student's parent(s)/guardian(s) for that specific trip. The parent permission form must plainly state that students will be transported in private vehicles. Drivers must be at least 21 years old and shall carry their own liability insurance coverage in compliance with State law. A copy of the driver's license, motor vehicle record, and insurance card shall be placed on file with the appropriate administrative official prior to the transportation of students. The driver must also adequately identify the vehicle that will be driven. Drivers may only transport as many students as there are functional seatbelts and must comply with all traffic rules and regulations during the trip. Transportation by other students is strictly prohibited.

Insurance Requirements

Certain field trips require additional insurance for the participants (i.e., out-of-state or overnight trip). If a field trip of this type is planned, the Risk Manager must be notified and his/her signature must be obtained indicating that adequate insurance has been secured before the trip will be approved.

Parent Notification

Once a field trip has been approved, the teacher must provide parents with the following information in writing:

1. The purpose and destination of the trip;
2. Mode of transportation;
3. Eating arrangements;
4. Pertinent safety information, such as recommended clothing or shoes;
5. Date;
6. Time of departure, estimated time of return, and a detailed itinerary when a field trip extends beyond a regular school day;
7. Contact information for at least one teacher/staff member who will accompany students in the event of an emergency.

Parental Permission

A parental permission slip is required for each student participating in the field trip, including walking trips. If parental permission cannot be obtained for a student, that student shall not participate in the field trip. Permission slips should be sent home at least two weeks before the date of the field trip and extra permission slips should be available in the school's main office.

Participation of Students

All students should be permitted to participate in field trips. However, students who cannot be controlled may be excluded. Students who remain at school during the field trip must be given appropriate assignments during the time of the field trip.

Supervision

1. It is expected that the teacher of a group of students will accompany them on any field trip. A ratio of one adult to ten students is recommended for elementary students. A ratio of one adult to fifteen students is recommended for secondary schools. The ratios may be modified with the approval of the school director.
2. Teachers organizing the field trip are responsible for arranging for adult volunteers and informing the volunteers of their duties and responsibilities prior to the trip.
3. Students will not be permitted to leave the field trip group unless they are released to parents.
4. If students return to the school from a field trip after school hours, the teacher will make arrangements for their safe departure home, taking into account the age of the students and the hour of return.

Cost

Field trips will be approved on the basis of availability of funds. Care should be exercised to assure that the cost of the field trip is matched by the educational gains to be reaped by the trip. Students may be charged a moderate fee to cover admission in an educational field trip because of the expense. "Scholarship aid" should be provided for students needing assistance and included in the planning of the field trip.

Safety

1. The teacher has primary responsibility for the conduct of the students. The teacher should clearly define acceptable standards of conduct with the students and supervising adults in advance of the field trip.

2. Prior to the field trip the teacher should attempt to identify those conditions, locations, and specific actions, which may be hazardous and take reasonable steps to avoid those hazards, thereby reducing the likelihood of injury or property damage.
3. If a hazard presents itself during the trip, the teacher should take action to ensure students avoid the hazard even if it means termination of the trip.
4. Should an emergency situation occur on the field trip, the teacher is responsible for notifying the appropriate emergency personnel and the school director as soon as possible. If medical attention is required, parents will be contacted immediately.

Review/Evaluation

After the field trip, the teacher will review and evaluate the learning experiences with the students, with the goal of helping the students relate what they learned during the field trip to units or topics being studied in the classroom. If a field trip has proven to be unsatisfactory, the teacher must file a letter with the school director outlining the reasons for dissatisfaction.

Letters of Appreciation

After the field trip, the teacher should prepare and send a letter of appreciation to the person(s) who made the field trip possible, including parent volunteers, the agency sponsoring the experience, and/or donors who funded the experience. Students should participate in showing their appreciation when feasible.

Non-School Day and Overnight Trip Guidelines

The following guidelines shall be additionally required for any overnight trip, or trip occurring on a non-school day.

1. Site Selection

The responsible teacher(s) shall personally verify that the housing or camping facilities are safe and conducive to accomplishing the objectives of the field trip. The facilities should be easy to supervise, clean, able to accommodate the group, and be handicap accessible.

2. Norms, Expectations, and Parental Permission

Permission slips should be sent home at least two weeks before the date of the field trip, along with a list of the norms and expectations for the trip. The list of norms and expectations shall be approved by the school director prior to being distributed

to students. The permission slip signed by the student's parent/guardian and an "Acknowledgement of Student Responsibilities" signed by the student and his/her parent/guardian must be received before the student is permitted to participate.

The list of norms and expectations must include, at a minimum, the following:

- Safe practices relating to all activities, including transportation;
- Curfew rules, if applicable;
- General conduct expectations, which reflect, at a minimum, District conduct and behavior standards;
- Statements concerning prohibitions on the use and/or possession of alcohol or drugs; and,
- Any additional rules or expectations related to the specific field trip, designed to ensure the safety of all participants.

3. Supervision

- At least one District employee must accompany the students to provide supervision. These individuals are primarily responsible for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the participants.
- Additional adult volunteers must be either District employees or parents of participating students.
- The District employees acting as supervisors are responsible for providing a written list of duties and responsibilities to each adult volunteer. A meeting must be held prior to the trip to discuss and clarify the expectations for adults and students while on the trip.
- A ratio of one adult to eight students is required for overnight trips.
- All adults participating in the trip are held to the same standards for alcohol and drug use as students and therefore should not possess, use, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at any time during the trip.
- District employees who are not fully qualified to supervise the trip should co-opt or employ qualified individuals or organizations to take charge of the more technical activities included in the field trip.

4. Emergencies

- Parents of participants must complete and sign an emergency release form and return it to the school prior to the trip.
- The District employee supervising the trip shall prepare and bring a complete list of names and telephone numbers of the participants and their emergency contact information, as well as a list of District employees/administrators for parents to contact in the event of an emergency. Copies of these lists will remain with the school administration.

- Arrangements must be made for emergency transportation.
- Plans for emergency communications must be established including arrangements to inform parents of changes in the itinerary, which may affect them, (i.e. return time or location).

Approved January 23, 2018.

LEGAL REFERENCES:

C.R.S. § 13-22-107 (*parental liability waivers*)

CROSS REFERENCES:

EEAG: Student Transportation in Private Vehicles