



INSTRUCTION: Field Trips

Field Trips and Foreign Travel Study Programs

I. Purpose

- A. To provide guidelines for approving and conducting field trips and foreign travel study programs sponsored by Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS).
- B. This rule does not apply to school-sponsored interscholastic, intramural or informal athletic competitions, unless the competition requires overnight or foreign travel.

II. Definitions

- A. *Chaperone* – A school volunteer chosen by the school principal and/or sponsoring teacher to accompany and supervise students on a day field trip, overnight field trip or foreign travel study program and who meets the following criteria prior to the scheduled trip:
 - 1. Chaperone for day field trip:
 - a. Is age 21 or older; and
 - b. Has completed the BCPS school volunteer application and training program requirements.
 - 2. Chaperone for overnight field trip or foreign travel:
 - a. Is age 21 or older;
 - b. Has completed the BCPS school volunteer training program requirements; and
 - c. Has completed the requisite school volunteer screening process, fingerprint background check and has been approved by the Office of Investigations and Risk Management.
- B. *Day field trip* – A field trip that occurs during the student school day. A day field trip may include in-state or out-of-state travel.
- C. *Extended-day field trip* – A field trip that occurs before and/or extends beyond the student school day. An extended-day field trip may include in-state or out-of-state travel.
- D. *Field trip* – A BCPS-sponsored group activity which is related to the instructional program and occurs off the school site.

- E. *Foreign travel study program* – A BCPS-sponsored trip that includes travel outside of the United States.
- F. *Overnight field trip* – A field trip that involves an overnight stay away from the student’s home. An overnight field trip may occur in-state or out-of-state, but not outside of the United States.
- G. *Parent* – The biological or adoptive parent, legal guardian or person acting in the absence of the parent or guardian.
- H. *Religious holiday* – A day or days noted on the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) student testing calendar when state primary test administrations cannot be scheduled.
- I. *School-sponsored activity* – An activity that is sponsored, approved, conducted, planned and/or supervised by school staff regardless of whether the activity takes place on or off school property or occurs during normal school hours.
- J. *Sponsoring teacher* – A BCPS certificated employee who is responsible for planning the field trip or foreign travel study program, completing the trip proposal form, coordinating and executing the trip details and supervising students.
- K. *Student school day* – From the opening bell signaling commencement of regular instructional hours until the bell signaling dismissal.

III. General

- A. All school-sponsored field trips and foreign travel study programs must be:
 - 1. Designed to support and extend classroom instruction;
 - 2. Clearly aligned to and a logical outgrowth of the curriculum goals and objectives;
 - 3. Supervised and accompanied by BCPS certificated personnel; and
 - 4. Approved by the principal and other appropriate personnel as provided in this Rule.
- B. Field trips and foreign travel study programs should be planned to provide for the safety, comfort and protection of students, teachers and chaperones.

- C. Students shall not be denied participation in field trips or foreign travel study programs because of their disability or economic status. Efforts shall be made to find ways to maximize participation by interested and qualified students in these field trips and foreign travel study programs.
 - 1. Students with disabilities must be provided equal opportunity for participation, including transportation to and from the destination, and all planned educational and recreational activities that take place at the field trip and/or foreign travel study program site(s).
 - 2. As part of the planning and implementation process, students with disabilities should be given the opportunity to participate with students without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate to meet the needs of any student with a disability. For this purpose, the student's IEP and/or 504 Plan should be available to staff coordinating and participating in these field trip and/or foreign travel study program opportunities.

- D. The principal shall monitor the involvement of teachers and students in field trips and foreign travel study programs to make certain that neither instructional time nor school resources are unduly compromised by multiple trips during a single school year.

- E. In order for a student to participate in a field trip or foreign travel study program, the parent must sign the permission form. If a trip is rescheduled, a new permission form must be provided and signed by the parent.

- F. Students participating in an approved field trip or foreign travel study program shall not be recorded as absent from school and shall be given opportunities to make up any missed work in other classes.

- G. All medications will be administered in accordance with BCPS medication administration procedures. This includes the requirement for written health care provider orders for all medications, prescription, over-the-counter and for medications to be stored in labeled pharmacy bottles.

- H. Students who are suspended or expelled from school at the time of a trip will be excluded from the field trip and/or foreign travel study program.

- I. Each day field trip, overnight field trip and foreign travel study program requires a supervising teacher and sufficient chaperones as determined by the school principal. If more than one school is traveling on the same field trip or foreign study program, each principal is responsible for assigning a

sufficient number of chaperones to accompany students who are attending from his/her own school.

- J. Chaperones shall complete the following requirements prior to the scheduled trip
 - 1. Day field trip chaperone
 - A chaperone for a day field trip may not accompany a trip until he/she has:
 - a. Completed the annual BCPS volunteer program requirements; and
 - b. Signed the chaperone agreement form.
 - 2. Overnight field trip or foreign travel program chaperone
 - A chaperone for an overnight field trip or foreign travel program may not accompany a trip until he/she has:
 - a. Completed the annual BCPS volunteer program requirements;
 - b. Completed the fingerprinting background check screening process and been approved by the Office of Investigations and Records Management; and
 - c. Signed the chaperone agreement form.
- K. A chaperone may not bring visitors, children, siblings or others in their care on the field trip.
- L. The following information regarding the field trip or a foreign travel study program shall be communicated in writing to all appropriate staff members, students and parents through normal channels of communication in advance of the departure date:
 - 1. Expectations for student conduct and notice that all Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) policies, Superintendent's rules and school procedures remain in effect at all times during the trip;
 - 2. Logistics and specific itineraries;
 - 3. Requirements for fingerprint background check for chaperones accompanying an overnight field trip and foreign travel program be completed no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled departure date;
 - 4. Health and safety procedures and plans, including requirement for health history and medication orders, if needed; and
 - 5. Notice that BCPS reserves the right to cancel a field trip or foreign study travel program, or recall any student and/or group of students previously approved for any field trip or foreign travel study

program for any reason. If such cancellation or recall occurs, the Board does not assume any liability, financial or otherwise, for any losses due to changes in or cancellation of the field trip or foreign study travel program.

- M. Appropriate evaluation/follow-up activities shall be planned to reinforce the educational objectives of the field trip and/or foreign travel study program.
- N. The following provisions apply to school closures due to inclement weather or other emergencies:
 - 1. Field trips
 - a. All day closing of schools
All field trips will be cancelled.
 - b. Delayed opening
All morning field trips will be cancelled.
 - c. Early dismissal
All afternoon field trips will be cancelled.
 - 2. Foreign travel study programs
The Superintendent shall decide whether students may participate in pre-approved foreign travel study programs. The decision of the Superintendent is final.
- O. Employees are prohibited from participating in any aspect of a field trip and/or foreign study program when such participation violates the Board's ethics code.
- P. Whenever possible, a field trip and/or foreign travel study program shall not be scheduled on a school system, federal or religious holiday. For the purpose of this rule, holidays begin at sunset on the preceding day.

IV. Guidelines by Category of Trip

- A. Extended-Day Field Trips
 - 1. For students in Grade 3 and below, the planned return to school should not be later than 6:00 p.m. when school is in session the next day.
 - 2. For Grades 4 and higher, the planned return to school should not be later than 9:00 p.m. when school is in session the next day.
 - 3. If the field trip schedule does not coordinate with the regular bus schedule, the sponsoring teacher must ensure that parents are notified in advance of special drop off/pick up requirements. The

sponsoring teacher must ensure that supervision of students is maintained until all students have been picked up or until the previous arrangements for dismissal (e.g., dismissal to after-school care) have been accomplished.

B. Overnight Field Trip

1. The field trip includes an overnight stay away from home and shall involve no more than 3 student school days.
2. Overnight field trips are the exception and are typically limited to secondary students.
3. Field trips that involve more than 3 student school days shall require the approval of the Community Superintendent and Superintendent or his/her designee.

C. Foreign Travel Study Program

1. A foreign travel study program shall involve no more than 5 student school days.
2. Foreign travel study programs shall require the approval of the Community Superintendent and Superintendent, or his/her designee.

V. Transportation

- A. When transportation for a field trip is provided, only a BCPS school bus or BCPS-approved bus contractor may be used.
- B. At least one teacher shall be assigned to each vehicle and be responsible for roll call, announcements and student supervision.
- C. The number of passengers on each vehicle shall not exceed the rated capacity of each vehicle used to transport students.
- D. All students shall travel to and from the field trip site under the supervision of a teacher, using designated vehicle when transportation is provided.
- E. Only in special cases, with prior approval of the school principal, may parents receive permission to transport their own child to and/or from a field trip. The parent must request permission in writing at least 5 student school days in advance of the field trip and acknowledge that school system insurance coverage will not apply. Parents may only transport their own child. The Board does not cover, nor is it liable for, comprehensive and collision coverage for the use of a private vehicle.

- F. For trips involving air and foreign travel, travel services shall be arranged with and provided by the travel services vendor under contract by the Board (hereinafter, “Board’s travel agent”).

VI. Planning and Approval

- A. Proposals for field trips and/or foreign travel study programs shall be submitted to the school principal as follows:
 - 1. Day field trip – Proposals shall be submitted 20 calendar days prior to departure.
 - 2. Extended-day field trip – Proposals shall be submitted 20 calendar days prior to departure.
 - 3. Overnight field trip – Proposals shall be submitted 60 calendar days prior to departure.
 - 4. Foreign travel study program – Proposals shall be submitted 6 months prior to departure.

- B. High-Risk Activities
 - 1. Prior to approval of field trips or foreign travel study programs, the list of prohibited high-risk activities found on the Office of Employee Absence and Risk Management (OEARM) Intranet site shall be reviewed. Prohibited high-risk activities are not to be included and/or approved.
 - 2. Proposals that include potential high-risk activities not included on the list of prohibited activities, must be reviewed and approved by the OEARM as outlined in Board Policy and Superintendent’s Rule 3160, *Review and Approval of School-Sponsored Activities*.
 - 3. No proposal shall be submitted for approval until the OEARM has completed its review.

- C. The sponsoring teacher shall submit the following to the school principal when requesting approval of a field trip:
 - 1. A completed proposal form.
 - 2. Destination and date of the field trip.
 - 3. For out-of-state field trips and foreign travel study programs, attach the Department of School Safety’s *Travel Safety Review and Recommendation for Travel* to the proposed trip’s locale, region and/or country as outlined in paragraph VII(B).

4. A detailed plan that outlines the relationship of the objectives of the field trip to the curriculum/instructional program and anticipated outcomes.
5. Detailed itinerary for each day of the field trip.
6. Approved *Request for Risk Management Review Form*, if applicable.
7. Cost per student.
8. Financing, including any approved fundraising activities.
9. Arrangement for meals.
10. Ratio of chaperones to students.
11. Mode(s) of transportation.
12. Names of accompanying certificated teachers.
13. Departure and return times.
14. Pre-planning and follow-up activities for students.
15. A copy of any contract, lease or agreement required for the trip and/or participation in the trip.

D. School Principal Review and Approval

Upon receipt of a field trip/foreign travel study program proposal, the principal will:

1. Review the sponsoring teacher's proposal and only approve the proposal if all of the requirements of Board Policy 6800 and this rule have been included.
2. Ensure that the proposal is consistent with the educational mission of the school system and aligns with the curricular goals and objectives.
3. Approve all field trip/foreign travel study program fundraising activities and ensure that the collection of all funds complies with the *Accounting Manual for School Activity Funds*.
4. Notify the sponsoring teacher of his/her decision in writing.
5. Place the field trip/foreign travel study program on the school calendar.
6. Forward the proposal to the appropriate administrator for review and approval as required by this Rule.

E. The field trip/foreign travel study program will be considered approved when all signatures have been obtained in the order provided below:

1. Day and extended-day field trip proposals – require the advance approval of:
 - a. School principal; and
 - b. Executive Director, School Support.
2. Overnight field trip proposals (fewer than three (3) school days) – require the advance approval of:

- a. School principal;
 - b. Curriculum content supervisor;
 - c. Director, Social Studies;
 - d. Executive Director, Academics; and
 - e. Community Superintendent.
3. Overnight field trip proposals (more than three (3) school days) – require the advance approval of:
 - a. School principal;
 - b. Curriculum content supervisor;
 - c. Director, Social Studies;
 - d. Executive Director, Academics;
 - e. Community Superintendent; and
 - f. Superintendent.

 4. Foreign travel study program proposals – require the advance approval of:
 - a. School principal;
 - b. Curriculum content supervisor;
 - c. Director, Social Studies;
 - d. Executive Director, Academics;
 - e. Community Superintendent; and
 - f. Superintendent.

VII. Responsibilities

A. Principal

1. Ensure that all required forms are completed in accordance with applicable timelines, requisite signatures have been obtained and that the proposal is submitted for approval in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this Rule.
2. Schedule field trips/foreign travel study programs to minimize conflicts with other school activities, including federal, state and Board-approved assessments.
3. Ensure that classes are covered for teachers on approved field trips/foreign travel study programs.
4. Ensure that the sponsoring teacher has access to the school building if a custodian will not be present at the time of the field trip/foreign travel study program departure or return.
5. Ensure that all contracts, agreements and/or leases are approved in accordance with Board policies, Superintendent’s rules and operating procedures. The principal, or superintendent, as

applicable, shall be the signatory on all such contracts, agreements and/or leases.

6. Ensure that the sponsoring teacher is advised of procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency, trip recall, illness or accident.
7. Ensure that the sponsoring teacher has arranged for supervision for any student not participating in the field trip/foreign travel study program.
8. Notify his/her Executive Director, School Support of any safety concerns that arise at any time before or during the field trip/foreign travel study program.
9. Maintain the original of all forms for the duration of the field trip/foreign travel study program and in accordance with the BCPS records retention schedule.

B. Department of School Safety

The Department of School Safety shall:

1. As part of the proposal submission process, conduct a travel safety review and recommendation of the locale, region and/or country to determine if health, safety and/or security conditions exist.
2. Prior to departure and during the trip and/or foreign travel study program, continue to monitor all travel warnings issued by the U.S. Department of State and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to determine if incidents or conditions exist that threaten the safety of participants.
3. In the event that a travel warning is issued in the affected area while an out-of-state field trip and/or foreign travel study program is in progress, notify the Director of Social Studies. The director will consult with the Superintendent to decide whether to cancel the trip and recall the participants.
4. In the event a decision is made to terminate the field trip or foreign travel study program, the Department of School Safety shall institute crisis response procedures and coordinate the evacuation, return of the trip participants and coordinate a communication's plan to notify trip participants and parents.

C. Sponsoring Teacher

1. Field Trips
 - a. Complete the appropriate field trip planning timeline form.
 - b. Coordinate travel and lodging with the BCPS Office of Transportation and/or the Board's travel agent, if applicable.

- c. Act as the liaison with the field trip destination and as the BCPS contact person for all questions concerning the field trip.
- d. Prepare, distribute and collect all pertinent information, including parent permission, chaperone agreement, student health history and authorization to administer medication forms.
- e. Collect all funds and deposit with the school financial secretary on a daily basis.
- f. For extended-day and overnight trips, include the following information with the permission slip:
 - (1) Detailed itinerary;
 - (2) Special clothing or cash needs;
 - (3) Special nighttime procedures; and
 - (4) Parent acknowledgement that a student may be sent home at the discretion of the sponsoring teacher in consultation with the school principal at the parent's expense.
- g. Identify teachers to accompany and supervise students.
- h. Identify chaperones for day field trips, overnight field trips or foreign travel and ensure that each chaperone has completed the BCPS volunteer training program requirements. Ensure that chaperones for overnight field trips and foreign travel programs have completed the requisite fingerprint background checks by the Office of Investigations and Records Management no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled trip.
- i. Provide the school nurse with list of students participating in the field trip at least one week in advance of the trip. In collaboration with school nurse, develop plan to meet students' health needs on the field trip, which may include training in medication administration, first aid and making health observations.
- j. Notify the school's cafeteria manager in advance of the Field trip with the number of students who will not be eating lunch on the days(s) of the trip.
- k. Review expectations for responsible student/chaperone behavior; i.e. bus behavior, group and individual courtesy, following directions, compliance with the student code of conduct, and all Board policies, Superintendent's rules and school procedures.

- l. Carry a list of names of students and chaperones participating in the field trip, emergency contact information for each participant and submit a list of same to the principal prior to the trip.
 - m. Notify the principal immediately of any emergency situation, including, but not limited to, an accident involving a student or other participant (employee, chaperone), student missing from the group or illness.
 - n. Ensure completion of evaluation/follow-up activities to reinforce the educational objectives of the field trip.
 - o. Complete the Field Trip Final Report form.
2. Foreign Travel Study Program
- The following additional responsibilities apply for foreign travel study programs:
- a. Make arrangements for air and lodging with the Board's travel agent.
 - b. Request the Board's travel agent send a representative to the mandatory pre-travel orientation sessions to respond to parent questions related to all aspects of the travel arrangements, including the company's cancellation and refund policies and travel insurance.
 - c. Schedule, at a minimum, 2 mandatory pre-travel orientation sessions to inform students, chaperones, teachers and parents about the foreign travel study program and their responsibilities.
 - (1) Orientation sessions shall be mandatory for the student participant and his/her parent.
 - (2) The mandatory orientation sessions will include the following:
 - (a) Student behavior expectations.
 - (b) Those expenses, not included in the costs, such as required inoculations, passport/Visa expenses and personal expenses.
 - (c) Health and safety procedures and plans, including requirement for health history and medication orders, if needed.
 - (3) The Board's travel agent's trip cancellation policy (if applicable), availability of travel insurance and the refund schedule (if any).

- (4) Parent financial responsibility in the event a student is removed from participation in the foreign travel study program for any reason.
- d. Maintain contact with the Department of School Safety prior to departure and during the trip to receive updates on travel advisories issued by the U.S. Department of State.
- e. The sponsoring teacher shall devise a contingency plan for maintaining communications with participants in the event of an emergency during the foreign travel study program.
- f. Upon conclusion of the foreign travel study program, complete the Overnight/Foreign Travel Study Program Final Report and submit copies to the principal.

D. Chaperones

Chaperones who will accompany students on a field trip or foreign travel study program are responsible for paying for all of their own expenses, including but not limited to, the cost of travel, requisite inoculations, passport/Visa expenses, lodging and any personal costs associated with the trip and shall:

- 1. Complete the BCPS volunteer training, volunteer application and submit to the school for processing.
- 2. Complete the BCPS volunteer training process no later than ten (10) days prior to the scheduled trip.
- 3. Chaperones volunteering to supervise students on overnight field trips and foreign travel study programs must submit to a fingerprinting background check. Such background check must be completed no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled departure date. The Office of Investigations and Risk Management reserves the right to deny any chaperone based on the results of the fingerprint background check.
- 4. Complete the *Chaperone Agreement Form* (Rule 6800, Form I).
- 5. Attend all requisite orientation sessions, if applicable.

E. Parent

The parent of the student participant shall:

- 1. Complete the following:
 - a. Parent/guardian permission form, and
 - b. For overnight field trips or foreign travel study programs, complete the following:

- (1) *Student Health History Form Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Study Program* (Rule 6800, Form K).
 - (2) *Request to Administer Medication/Treatments Form Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Study Program*, if applicable. (Rule 6800, Form L)
2. Attend all orientation sessions, if applicable.
 3. For foreign travel study programs, be responsible for the cost of travel to and from the destination country, requisite inoculations, passport/Visa expenses, medical/travel insurance (mandatory) and any personal costs associated with the trip.
 4. Acknowledge that a student may be sent home at the discretion of the sponsoring teacher in consultation with the school principal at the parent's expense.

F. Student Participant

The student participant shall:

1. Adhere to the BCPS student code of conduct, Board policies, Superintendent's rules and all school staff directives at all times while participating in the field trip and/or foreign travel study program. (*See, Board of Education Policy 5550, Disruptive Behavior*)
 - a. Violations of the student code of conduct may result in immediate removal dismissal from the trip.
 - b. In the event a student is dismissed from the field trip or is sent home for any reason prior to the conclusion of the trip, the student's parent shall assume all financial responsibilities for returning the student to his/her home.
2. Sign the authorization section of the applicable Parent/Guardian Permission Form. (See Rule 6800, Forms F and G)
3. Attend all orientation sessions, as applicable.
4. Make up any school work missed as a result of participation of the field trip.

VIII. Cancellation

- A. The Superintendent reserves the right to cancel a field trip or foreign travel study program, or recall any student and/or group of students previously approved for any field trip or foreign travel study program for any reason.

- B. If such cancellation or recall occurs, the Board does not assume any liability, financial or otherwise, for any losses due to changes in or cancellation of the field trip or foreign study travel program.

Legal References: *Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §4-105, Comprehensive Liability Insurance; Defense of Sovereign Immunity*
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §7-305, Suspension and Expulsion Procedures
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §7-308, Authority of School to Search Student
COMAR 13A.08.01.01, *Attendance*

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 1260, *School Volunteers*
Board of Education Policy 3125, *School Activity Funds*
Board of Education Policy 3150, *Board Insurance Program*
Board of Education Policy 3160, *Review and Approval of School-Sponsored Activities*
Board of Education Policy 3215, *Contract Execution*
Board of Education Policy 5460, *Searches*
Board of Education Policy 5500, *Code of Student Conduct*
Board of Education Policy 5520, *Student Dress Code*
Board of Education Policy 5530, *Student Use and Possession of Tobacco*
Board of Education Policy 5540, *Alcoholic Beverages, Controlled Dangerous Substances, Intoxicants, Prescription and Nonprescription Drugs*
Board of Education Policy 5550, *Disruptive Behavior*
Board of Education Policy 5560, *Suspensions, Assignment to Alternative Programs or Expulsions*
Board of Education Policy 6000, *Curriculum and Instruction*
Board of Education Policy Sub Series 8360, *Ethics Code*
Board of Education Policy 8410, *Reporting Fraud, Waste, Abuse or Unlawful Acts*

Related Rule: Superintendent's Rule 6303, *Emergency Closures, Delayed Opening and Early Dismissal of Schools and/or Offices*

Rule

Superintendent of Schools

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