

## **EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS AND STUDENT TRAVEL**

Educational field trips shall be planned and conducted in accordance with the following guidelines.

### **District Sponsored Educational Field Trips and Student Travel**

- A. Educational field trips limited to school hours for not more than one day and trips beyond school hours not exceeding one day require the prior approval of the building principal and shall be planned and conducted in accordance with the following guidelines:
  - 1. The sponsor shall review the educational value of the field trip and receive the principal's approval prior to making arrangements for the field trip. The principal must determine that the trip is an outgrowth of curriculum or co-curriculum and that participation is non-discriminatory; grades, attendance and behavior shall not be used to exclude any student from participating in an educational field trip. The sponsor shall also review the list of prohibited and restricted activities (Board Exhibit IJOA-E) and plan accordingly.
  - 2. A parental permission slip shall be required for each student participating in the trip, including walking or bicycling excursions. Slips shall be available in each school office.
  - 3. The sponsor shall provide the parent/guardian/legal custodians with information concerning the purpose and destination of the trip, transportation, eating arrangements, date and time of departure, and estimated time of return. A detailed itinerary will be provided when the trip extends beyond a school day. The student to adult ratio will be included on the parental permission form.
  - 4. The sponsor shall review acceptable standards of conduct and safety rules with the students in advance of the trip. The sponsor has primary responsibility for supervision of the students.
  - 5. The sponsor shall implement the buddy system, or partners, to insure constant awareness of each student's whereabouts, needs and participation.
  - 6. The sponsor shall take appropriate action and notify the principal by telephone as soon as possible in the event of an emergency.
- B. Participating students may be required to pay a pro rata share of costs for any special transportation, admission fees, etc. Consideration shall be made for students needing assistance for such expenses.
- C. Only sponsors, students, and chaperones may participate in district-authorized educational field trips and travel. It is the district's intent to authorize educational trips and travel that are solely for its students. The recommended ratio of sponsor to students is 1:10, but may be less based on the nature of the activity, the maturity and ability level of students, or gender balance.

In some cases, (e.g. large music groups, etc.) the recommended ratio may be very

difficult to achieve. Non-district/parent chaperones may be considered a part of this ratio as long as they have attended an informational meeting describing their responsibilities as a chaperone, and received superintendent or designee approval. Sponsors are responsible for informing accompanying adults of their duties and responsibilities.

D. Transportation will be handled as follows:

1. School buses ordinarily will be used for transportation. Commercial carriers may be used for certain trips.
2. Requests for school bus or commercial transportation will be channeled through the principal to the director of transportation.
3. The use of private vehicles by staff members for transporting small groups of students must conform to policy EEAG, Student Travel in Private Vehicles, including that the driver has the required liability insurance. Transportation by students will not be permitted. Under no circumstances will vans with a capacity of 12 or more passengers, motorcycles, motor homes, recreational vehicles or convertibles be allowed to transport students.
4. Students will not be permitted to leave the field trip group during the trip unless they are released to their own parent/guardian/legal custodian or to those of other students, provided that a written note of approval has been received by the principal from the parent/guardian/legal custodian prior to the trip.
5. If students return to the school from a trip after school hours, the sponsor and the principal shall make provisions for their safe departure home, taking into account the age of the student and the time of day.

E. Overnight trips within the state and out-of-state trips must be approved by the principal and the superintendent or designee. If the trip is out-of-state, it must be determined that the trip or a similar trip is not available within the state, that the trip is a national event and that participants are members of a state charter and/or participation has been earned through exceptional performance or by exclusive invitation based on merit.

F. No sponsor may receive additional pay either from the district or an outside entity for the time involved in student travel activities. Group fundraising money will not be returned to individual students. Any excess monies will be held in a student activity account for students who require monetary assistance to participate in future educational field trips.

Out-of-state and overnight student trips must meet the requirements listed in sections A-F above. In addition, the following requirements must be met:

G. The request for approval of overnight and out-of-state student travel must be submitted at least 30 days before the date of the trip. All approved forms and trip records shall be kept on file at the school until the completion of the trip. The school shall send the approved forms to the insurance and risk management office after the trip. The 30 day time requirement is waived when a team or student participating in a competitive activity advances to the next level of competition and there is less than 30 days available

for notification. In this case approval shall be sought as soon as the competition date is known.

- H. Each student participating in the trip must fill out and return out-of-state and/or overnight travel forms, including a parental permission slip, an assumption of risk agreement, a medical questionnaire, trip rules and behavior contract, and a release slip for emergency medical treatment. Students and parents/guardians/legal custodians will receive specific trip information in accordance with section A, which will include information regarding lodging arrangements. The principal must ensure that all forms are completed prior to departure. Forms are available from the district insurance office.
- I. The sponsor has primary responsibility for the conduct of the students and should review acceptable standards of conduct with them in advance of the trip. As a condition for trip participation, students and their parent/guardian/legal custodians will be informed of the rules and regulations in place for the trip and must agree to comply with them as well as with all district policies and procedures. A student who violates any rule, regulation or district policy or procedure may be sent home at the student's expense and will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in district policies and procedures.
- J. Students will not be permitted to leave the group during the trip unless they are released to their own parent/guardian/legal custodian.
- K. Participating students will pay a pro rata share of costs for the trip. Consideration shall be made for students needing assistance for such expenses. Reasonable expenses for the district employee and chaperone may be covered by the school or departmental budget, in accordance with district policy or practice.
- L. District vehicles ordinarily will be used for in-state transportation. Commercial carriers and/or rental cars will be used for out-of-state trips. In exceptional cases the superintendent or designee may approve the use of private vehicles to transport students to out-of-state activities. Exceptional cases shall be determined by review of the number of students traveling, relative costs, safety factors, distance, etc. If private vehicle transportation is approved the driver must provide proof of a valid Colorado driver's license and auto liability insurance coverage to the district insurance department. The driver must also provide his/her motor vehicle record for review and determination that the record meets the district's insurance standards before he/she is approved to transport students in a private vehicle.
- M. Under no circumstances will vans with a capacity of 12 or more passengers, motorcycles, motor homes, recreational vehicles or convertibles be allowed to transport students.
- N. All activities are expected to comply with district policies, and if applicable, meet the regulations of the Colorado High School Activities Association.
- O. Insurance coverage for out-of-state trips must be obtained through or approved by the district insurance department.
- P. Non-district/parent chaperones are subject to a background check at the expense of the non-district/parent chaperone.

### **Non-District Sponsored Field Trips**

The Board recognizes that occasionally employees and students of the district participate in trips that are not approved by district staff and the Board of Education. Such trips are called “non-district sponsored trips.” The district is not liable or responsible for injuries, losses or damages that arise from non-district sponsored trips. Student participants and their parents, guardians or legal custodians assume personal liability for any injuries, losses or damages associated with, caused by, or related to such trips. District employees who are involved with or participate in a non-district sponsored trip will have to rely on their own personal insurance coverage as a remedy for any injuries, losses or damages they suffer personally or any claims brought against them by others as a result of their involvement and/or participation in any phase of that trip.

Employees may not use school time, equipment or supplies to create, produce or disseminate information about the non-district sponsored trip. Dissemination of written material about a non-district sponsored trip will be in accordance with the procedures for distribution of other non-curricular or non-district materials. (See KHC and KHC-R, Distribution/ Posting of Non-Curricular Material to Students.) In addition, all written material about a non-district sponsored trip shall contain the following disclaimer: “This trip is not sponsored or approved by the Thompson School District. The Thompson School District is not responsible in any way for any injuries, losses or damages associated with, caused by, or related to the trip.”

No district funds will be used to pay for or reimburse any of the participants’ or employees’ expenses. No district vehicles may be used for non-district sponsored trips. Funds to support non-district sponsored trips may not be generated through school or district fundraising activities during the school day. The use of district facilities outside of the school day is allowed only with an approved permit for building and facility use. The approval of the permit is at the discretion of the building principal, designee or appropriate director.

District employees who are found in violation of these items may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

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