

Descriptor Term: FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS	Descriptor: IJOA	Issued: 01/18/2011
	Rescinds: *	Issued:
<u>BOARD POLICY</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board of Trustees recognizes that field trips and excursions used as integral activities for teaching and learning the curriculum are educationally sound components of the instructional program. Carefully planned and appropriately supervised field trips and excursions are supported as opportunities to supplement and enrich classroom and extracurricular activities by providing learning experiences that may not be obtainable through other means of instructional presentation. 2. All field trips and excursions must have a curricular relevance; therefore, each approved field trip and excursion must be preceded by adequate classroom instruction and preparation appropriate to the understanding of students. This prior instruction and preparation must also be supported by follow-up instructional activities and assignments reflective of the learning gained through participation in the field trip or excursion. 3. The safety and security of students participating in school sponsored field trips and excursions are of paramount concern and essential to the ultimate success of the field trip/excursion. Procedures for the planning and operation of field trips and excursions shall be developed by the superintendent or designee. Such procedures shall be designed to protect the safety of the students and to ensure that parental permission is obtained before the student leaves the school. 4. Instructional time for students is of primary importance. Teachers, principals, and other administrators are directed to weigh field trip/excursion requests in terms of total time away from class, the educational value in relation to the curriculum, the expense to the school and/or student, and the number of trips taken previously within the same school year by the same class or group of students. Because well-organized field trips provide a unique method for learning, all students in grades K-6 should have the opportunity to participate in at least one educational field trip per school year. 5. Field trips and excursions must be organized in such a way that all students enrolled in the sponsoring class or group can participate with parental permission and without excessive personal financial commitment. 6. All overnight field trips or excursions may only occur with prior approval by the Board. Approval of all other field trips and excursions is delegated to the superintendent or designee. The Board does not accept responsibility for student travel taken without such advanced written approval. 7. Privately sponsored field trips, excursions, and educational tours are not endorsed by the Board. Employees are not permitted to engage in selling educational tours during the school day or to utilize the name of the District to gain support for private trips. The District does not assume any liability for student travel that has not received the prior approval of the superintendent or designee, or the Board. 8. Teachers, administrators, and other staff should review this policy and procedure to determine whether field trips or excursions are the most appropriate and efficient methods for meeting instructional goals. 		
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ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES1. Definitions

- 1.1. Field trips are off-campus trips directly related to a specific course and primary content area that provide learning experiences that cannot be achieved through other types of instructional activities. In general, field trips must be instructionally focused, integrated with the approved TPSD curriculum, and coordinated with classroom activities so that opportunities for student learning and achievement are extended beyond those offered in the classroom.
- 1.2. Excursions are off-campus trips made by extracurricular groups such as clubs, athletic teams, competitive or presentation groups, student government groups, special interest groups, etc. Excursions must reflect either a requirement of the activity or group or an enhancement to the desired outcome for successful participation in the activity or group
- 1.3. Note: In cases such as special off-campus presentations by choral or band groups, the distinction between an instructional field trip or an excursion may not be clear. Whether field trip or excursion, school sponsored travel requires prior approval by the principal and superintendent or designee and detailed planning to support the safety and security of students.

2. Alternative assignments and lesson plans must be available to students who choose not to participate in field trips/excursions. Participation in athletic, band, or choral competitions may be required as part of the curriculum in these activities. Students participating in field trips and excursions will be allowed to make up work missed in other classrooms.

3. Scholarships must be available for students who need support in meeting costs related to participating in the field trip/excursion. Working with the teacher and/or sponsor, the principal will implement a confidential process through which parents can request scholarships. All students who are members of the class or group sponsoring the field trip/excursion shall be provided the opportunity to participate regardless of financial ability.

4. Safety and Supervision

- 4.1. Teachers and principals who sponsor field trips/excursions must address the safety and security of students.
- 4.2. Participating students will be divided into primary groups with an approved adult in charge of each group. Small groups of students, based on the age of the students and the nature of the field trip/ excursion, will form the nucleus for planning and supervision. The small groups will provide centers for student management, safety, support, supervision, counseling, and accountability throughout the trip.
- 4.3. A licensed TPSD staff member will have overall responsibility for planning and supervising all field trips/excursions. Additional licensed staff members or other TPSD employees may be considered based on provisions for student safety, differing ratios of students to adults, and instructional activities. The following ratios will be applied in terms of adults to students: 1:5 for grades Pre-K, K, 1, 2; 1:8 for grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; and 1:12 for grades 9, 10, 11, 12.
- 4.4. A licensed staff member will be designated as supervisor on administrator will accompany all overnight field trips and excursions.
- 4.5. Sponsoring teachers and/or principals shall consider the expertise of supervisors in both instructional and student safety/management areas, and must provide training and information to chaperones commensurate to the nature of the field trip or excursion.

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

IJOA

- 4.6. For overnight field trips and excursions, the sponsoring teacher and principal or designee will schedule and meet with the parents of students eligible for participation. Details of the field trip/excursion including a written description of the plan for supervision and the expectation for student conduct will be provided to parents.
 - 4.7. Consumption of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances by chaperones or District employees is prohibited during the operation and supervision of field trips/excursions. Medications taken under prescription of a licensed physician are permitted.
 - 4.8. An emergency plan will be established to address illnesses or injuries to participants, mechanical failure of buses or other means of transportation, changes or delays in schedules, cancellation of activities, severe weather conditions, separation of student from group, inappropriate behavior, etc. Updated emergency and health forms or summary lists will be collected and copied for use by chaperones. Copies of all information will also be filed in the school.
5. Field Trip/Excursion Request Form
- 5.1. The Field Trip/Excursion Request Form is designed to provide support for teachers and principals in planning and implementing field trips and excursions.
 - 5.2. Completion and submission of the Request Form to the principal and superintendent or designee for review and approval is a required component of the planning process for all field trips and excursions other than athletic competitions that are scheduled and conducted based on a published, pre-approved schedule.
 - 5.3. Field trips/excursions taken without the prior written approval of the principal and superintendent or designee may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of contract.
 - 5.4. Field trips and excursions must be discussed with the principal as early as possible in the school year. Timelines for submission of the Request Form shall be as follows:
 - 5.4.1. Walking field trips/excursions – One week prior to requested date.
 - 5.4.2. Day field trips/excursions requiring transportation – Two weeks prior to requested date.
 - 5.4.3. Overnight field trips/excursions – Three months prior to requested date.
6. Forms and Exhibits
- Field trip/excursion planning attachments as listed herein will be utilized based on the amount of information needed to support the length and nature of the trip. The purpose of the planning attachments is to assist principals and teachers in providing for the safety and security of students and in communicating information to parents. The following documents and attachments are provided for use in requesting and planning field trips and shall be provided to the principal, superintendent or designee, or the Board, as required:
- 6.1. Field Trip/Excursion Checklist - The checklist is provided for planning purposes, but need not be submitted to the superintendent or designee for approval.
 - 6.2. Trip Itinerary - A trip itinerary must be submitted for all overnight trips and for day trips requiring transportation if more than one site is visited or if the trip involves travel outside Lee County. Sites to be visited along with dates, times, and contact information must be provided.
 - 6.3. Trip Chaperones - Parents and other approved community members may serve as chaperones for field trips/excursions. All chaperones for overnight trips must pass a criminal background check. A listing of all approved trip chaperones, with home/emergency contact telephone numbers, must be provided for all field trips/excursions. The list of chaperones should identify individuals as administrator, teacher, security officer, approved parent/volunteer, etc.

- 6.4. Parent Permission Form - Written permission of the parent or guardian must be obtained before a student participates in any school-sponsored field trip/excursion. The fully completed Parent Permission Form or a list of students with and without signed forms must be filed with the principal or designee before any field trips/excursions are taken.
- 6.5. Projected Costs of Field Trip/Excursion - Projected individual student costs and total trip costs shall be provided for all overnight trips and for day trips involving travel outside Lee County. The listing of projected individual and total trip costs should include all foreseeable expenses, including transportation, lodging, meals, admission registration, incidental expenses, etc.
- 6.6. Travel Expense Request - A travel expense request must be completed for all trips involving cost to individual students or school budgets.
- 6.7. Charter Bus Contract - Contracts with charter bus vendors or other commercial carriers must be submitted for review and approval by the superintendent and Board.. In order to be placed on the agenda for consideration by the Board of Trustees, the charter bus contract must be received by the TPSD purchasing agent at least ten days before the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.
7. Field trips and excursions are to be announced and shared with students only after receipt of the approved Field Trip/Excursion Request Form. Request forms that are denied will be accompanied by the reason(s) for denial. Fund raising or collection of fees for field trips/excursions must not take place prior to receipt of the approved Field Trip/Excursion Request Form. Additionally, fund raising and collection of fees must comply with all District policy guidelines.
8. Additional Regulations
 - 8.1. Limitations
 - 8.1.1. Unless special circumstances exist, field trips/excursions will not be approved during the first week of the school year or during the last week of each semester.
 - 8.1.2. Field trips/excursions will not be approved if such trips/excursions result in the absence of students from the same class or classes for 5 or more class periods. In the absence of special circumstances such as competitions, special study, etc., a maximum of two field trips per year may be approved for an individual class or group.
 - 8.2. Student Participation
 - 8.2.1. Except in courses in which excursions are a regularly scheduled part of the curriculum of which parents and students are made aware at the time the course is elected by the students, students may not be required to participate in the excursion. If failure to participate in the excursion due to unforeseen, emergency, or special circumstances results in the lowering of the grade for the course, an alternative assignment will be provided to allow the student an opportunity to improve his grade.
 - 8.2.2. Participation by students in field trips/excursions that are used to enhance the curriculum is voluntary. Alternative assignments related to the same instructional goal as the field trip/excursion will be provided for students who elect not to participate.
 - 8.2.3. Participating students and their parents/guardians will be notified that all school rules relating to student behavior and conduct are applicable during field trips/excursions. Based on the nature of the particular field trip/excursion, students and their parents/guardians must also be provided in writing any special rules for behavior and conduct applicable to the trip/excursion.

- 8.2.4. Students may be charged a fee to help pay the costs for transportation and admission charges.
- 8.2.5. Students in all grades and courses will be afforded equal opportunities for participating in field trips that are appropriate for their grades and courses regardless of teacher assignment. This regulation is designed to assure that, for example, all first grade students or all U.S. History students have the opportunity for effective instructional field trips.
- 8.3. In general, recreational field trips/excursions will not be approved. If a recreational trip is requested as a student reward, the requested trip must be the most appropriate type of reward and must provide planned activities of educational value for all students attending.

Transportation

- 8.3.1. Transportation for field trips/excursions will be provided by District school buses to the extent possible. Regular student transportation needs and schedules have priority over field trips and must be considered when making field trip requests. Once formal approval has been received for a field trip/excursion, the principal or designee will make final, necessary arrangements for transportation. District buses must be operated by drivers approved by the Director of Transportation.
- 8.3.2. Approval for use of school buses will require the completion of the TPSD Request for Use of School Buses. Submission of the Request for School Buses must meet the same timelines as those established for securing approval of the superintendent or designee for the trip.
- 8.3.3. Use of charter or commercial buses for transportation of students on field trips/excursions may be approved if District buses cannot be used or are otherwise not suited for the nature of the trip. Charter bus companies must agree to meet all District requirements including but not limited to no smoking on the bus, abiding by established speed limits and laws, and cooperating with school officials to achieve a safe and enjoyable trip.

EXHIBITS

IJOA Exhibit 1.0111 Field Trip/Excursion Checklist (formerly IJOA-E2)

REFERENCES

TPSD Policies JJH, GBEA

FORMS

IJOA 1.0111 Field Trip/Excursion Request Form (formerly IJOA-E3)

IJOA 2.0111 Field Trip/Excursion Itinerary

IJOA 3.0111 Parent Permission Form (formerly IJOA-E4)

IJOA 4.0111 Travel Expense Request

IJOA 5.0111 Request for Use of School Buses

***RESCINDS**

IJOA 06/13/2000

IJOA-E1 07/28/2009

IJOA-E2 06/13/2000

IJOA-E3 06/13/2000

IJOA-E4 06/13/2000

IJOA-R 07/28/2009