



## 610 FIELD TRIPS

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for student trips and to identify the general process to be followed for review and approval of trip requests.

### II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The general expectation of the school board is that all student trips will be well planned, conducted in an orderly manner and safe environment, and will relate directly to the objectives of the class or activity for which the trip is requested. Additional criteria to be considered include trip crisis plan (Examples; student injury, student illness, lead organizer illness, death of family member at home, etc.), total cost to the participant and/or district, effect of absence upon scholastic performance of participating students and impact upon the overall operation of the school. The school board reserves the right to approve extended trips on an individual basis.

Student trips will be categorized within three general areas:

#### A. Required Instructional Trips

Trips that take place during the school day, relate directly to a course of study, and require student participation shall fall in this category. These trips shall be subject to review and approval of the building principal and shall be financed by school district funds within the constraints of the school building budget. Students without parent permission will participate in an alternate activity with the same learning objectives and credit. Fees may not be assessed against students to defray direct costs of instructional trips. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.37, Prohibited Fees)

#### B. Optional Supplementary Trips

This category pertains to those trips in which students voluntarily participate and which supplement the instructional or activity program goals. **These trips** usually take place outside the regular school day. Examples of trips in this category involve cultural events, student activities, clubs, and other special interest groups or social activities. These trips are subject to review and approval of the activities director and/or the building principal. Financial contributions by students may be requested. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.36, Authorized Fees).

#### C. Extended Trips

1. Trips that involve one or more overnight stops fall into this category. Extended trips **must** be instructional or supplementary and must be requested well in advance of the planned activity. An extended trip request form must be completed and approved at

each level: student, principal, superintendent, and school board. The form must indicate any potentially hidden costs (i.e. pre-trips). Exceptions to the approval policy may be granted or expedited to accommodate emergencies or contingencies (e.g., tournament competition).

2. The school board encourages administration to ensure lower cost extended trips are offered periodically. The goal is to provide all students at least one opportunity for this type of educational experience during their high school years.
  - a) It is expected that opportunities to reduce the costs of extended trips are available for each trip. This includes, but is not limited to, merit-based scholarships and fundraising opportunities.
  - b) It is also expected that staff research various tour options for extended trips, to ensure the trips are of high quality, but are also as low cost as possible. The travel companies chosen must offer trips for all students, including students with special needs.
  - c) Ratios of chaperones to students must be determined in advance and take into consideration any special accommodations or requirements for students with special needs. ~~special needs students~~. The ratios must be communicated to parents/guardians and students.
  - d) The primary chaperones are to be the district staff. Parents/guardians of students participating in the trip shall be offered the opportunity to voluntarily chaperone before others (spouses of staff, other relatives, community members, etc.). All volunteer chaperones shall pay for all of their own travel costs associated with the trip, unless offered as a benefit through the trip provider.
3. The school board acknowledges and supports the efforts of booster clubs and similar organizations in providing extended trip opportunities for students.
4. Participating in overnight trips for curricular, co-curricular, or extracurricular activities is a privilege. To ensure the safety of the traveling party, participants may be subject to a search of their person or possessions by school administrators prior to boarding the transportation for an overnight event.

### III. REGULATIONS

- A. Rules of conduct and discipline for students and employees shall apply to all student trip activities.
- B. The school administration shall be responsible for providing more detailed procedures, including parental involvement, supervision, and such other factors deemed important and

in the best interest of students.

- C. All volunteers accompanying students on extended trips will be subject to a background check. ~~in accordance with Policy 903.1.~~ Volunteers will be responsible for the cost of the background check.
- D. Transportation shall be furnished through a commercial carrier or school-owned vehicle.
- E. An employee may use a personal vehicle to transport staff or personal property for purposes of a field trip upon prior, written approval from administration.
- F. An employee must not use a personal vehicle to transport one or more students for purposes of a field trip.
  - 1. If immediate transportation of a student is required due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, such as the illness or injury of a child, and the transportation does not constitute regular or scheduled transportation, a personal vehicle may be used. To the extent a personal vehicle is used, the vehicle must be properly registered and insured.
  - 2. An employee must obtain pre-approval by administration of student transportation by a personal vehicle, pursuant to Section III.E.1, if practicable. If pre-approval by administration of use of a personal vehicle cannot be obtained in a reasonable time given the circumstances, an employee shall report the relevant facts and circumstances justifying the need for use of a personal vehicle to administration as soon as practicable. The relevant facts and circumstances for use of a personal vehicle shall be documented by administration.

#### IV. SCHOOL BOARD REVIEW

The superintendent shall at least annually report to the school board upon the utilization of trips under this policy or the school board may, at any time, decide to cancel a pre-approved trip. This decision would typically occur due to safety concerns for the students and staff.

The Superintendent has the discretion to cancel any trip at any time if he/she determines that proceeding with the field trip may unduly jeopardize students' health or safety. The district may not be responsible for any financial loss associated with the cancellation of trips. Therefore, students or chaperones participating in any activity involving substantial prepayment of fees are highly recommended to seek a reputable travel insurance policy.

**Legal References:** *Minn. Stat. § 123B.36 (Authorized Fees)*  
*Minn. Stat. § 123B.37 (Prohibited Fees)*  
*Minn. Stat. § 123B.49 (~~Co-curricular and~~ Extracurricular Activities; Insurance)*  
*Minn. Stat. § 169.011, Subd. 71(a) (Definitions ~~of a School Bus~~)*

*Minn. Stat. § 169.454, Subd. 13 (Type III Vehicle Standards – ~~Exemption~~)*  
*Sonkowsky v. Board of Educ. for Indep. Sch. Dist. No. 721, 327 F.3d 675 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2003)*  
*Lee v. Pine Bluff Sch. Dist., 472 F.3d 1026 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2007)*

**Cross References:** ~~MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)~~  
*ISD 200 Policy 423 (Employee – Student Relationships)*  
*ISD 200 Policy 506 (Student Discipline)*  
~~MSBA/MASA Model Policy 707 (Transportation of Public School Students)~~  
*ISD 200 Policy 709 (Student Transportation Safety Policy)*  
*ISD 200 Policy 710 (Extracurricular Transportation)*  
*ISD 200 Policy 903A*

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