

Descriptor Term: FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS: REGULATIONS	Descriptor: IJOA-R	Issued: DRAFT
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Planning and operation of approved field trips and excursions should be a cooperative activity of the students, teachers and principal. Parental input and involvement will be encouraged. The following regulations shall be applied during the planning and operation of all Tupelo Public School District field trips and excursions. These regulations are not intended to be all-inclusive but are designated to provide guidelines for teachers and principals in planning and conducting field trips and excursions. Safety and security of students participating in school sponsored field trips and excursions shall serve as the primary guide for the level of planning.

With the focus on the safety and security of students, regulations for planning and operation of field trips and excursions are as listed:

Trip Approval

- Field trips and excursions must contribute to the accomplishment of Tupelo Public School District learnings and skills, increase students' knowledge and capabilities related to the primary course content, be consistent with the approved extracurricular activity or sport, and provide the opportunity to increase learning and achievement beyond the opportunity available through other methods of instructional presentation.
- Field trips and excursions must be discussed with the principal as early as possible in the school year. If the principal gives verbal approval, the sponsoring teacher, coach, choral or band director, etc. must complete the TPSD Field Trip and Excursion Request Form. The timelines for submitting the TPSD Field Trip and Excursion Request Form for review by the Superintendent or designee are as follows: (1) walking field trips or excursions – one week prior to the requested date of the trip, (2) field trips or excursions requiring transportation – two weeks prior to the date of the trip, and (3) overnight field trips or excursions – three months prior to the date of the trip.
- Field trips and excursions are to be announced and shared with students only after receipt of the approved TPSD Field Trip and Excursion Request Form. Request forms for field trips and excursions that are denied will be accompanied by the reason(s) for denial. Fund raising or collection of fees for field trips and excursions must not take place prior to receipt of the approved TPSD Field Trip and Excursion Request. Additionally, fund raising and collection of fees must meet policy guidelines of the Tupelo Public School District.
- Certain field trips and excursions may have inherent risks that are deemed unsuitable for district sponsorship and approval, even though the trips or excursions may have educational value. Discretion of the Board of Trustees will be the deciding factor and judgement of the Superintendent or designee shall be considered final.
- Field trips and excursions that require contracts with commercial carriers or other vendors will be forwarded to the Board for contract review and approval. In addition, field trips and excursions for which precedent has not previously been established may be brought before the Board. Field trips and excursions may also

be brought to the Board as one means of keeping the Board informed of the range of activities covered under field trips and excursions. Annually, the Superintendent or designee will present a summary report by school of field trips and excursions in which students have participated.

- Unless special circumstances exist, field trips and excursions will not be approved during the first week of the school year or during the last week of each semester.
- In general, recreational field trips and 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.
- Field trips and excursions taken without the prior written approval of the principal and superintendent or designee may result in disciplinary action up to and including **consideration of** termination of contract.
- Field trips and excursions will not be approved if such trips or 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.

Student Participation

- Written permission of the parent or guardian must be obtained before a student participates in a school-sponsored field trip or excursion. Signed permission forms or a list of students with and without signed forms must be filed with the principal or designee before any field trips or excursions are taken. The permission form must indicate that the parent has the right to request that his child not participate in the particular field trip or excursion.
- 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.
- Participation by students in field trips and excursions that are used to enhance the curriculum is voluntary. Alternative assignments related to the same instructional goal as the field trip or excursion will be provided for students who elect not to participate.
- Participating students and their parents or guardians will be notified that all school rules relating to student behavior and conduct are applicable during field trips and excursions. Based on the nature of the particular field trip or excursion, students and their parents or guardians must also be provided in writing any special rules for behavior and conduct applicable to the trip or excursion.
- All student members of the class or group sponsoring an approved field trip or excursion will be provided the opportunity to participate. Students shall not be denied the opportunity to participate in the field trip or excursion due to financial capabilities. Students may be charged a fee to help pay the costs for transportation and admission charges. Fees in excess of fifty dollars per student may be recommended to the Superintendent or designee based on a majority vote by the

parents or guardians of students who are members of the sponsoring class or group.

- 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.

Supervision

- At least three factors must be considered in the planning and implementation of supervision for field trips and excursions. These factors are safety of students as determined by the age of the students and the nature of trip/excursion activities, special expertise of supervisors in both instructional and student safety/management areas, and the number of chaperones needed to establish the small primary groups required by TPSD policy.
- Every field trip or excursion must be supervised by a licensed employee of the TPSD. Additional numbers of 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, 3; 1:8 for grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; and 1:12 for grades 9, 10, 11, 12. **An administrator or designee must accompany all overnight trips.**
- Parents and other approved community members can serve as chaperones for field trips and excursions. To the extent possible, composition of chaperones for field trips will be reflective of the participating students in terms of gender and race. **All chaperones for overnight trips must pass a criminal background check.**
- ~~All field trips and excursions for students in grades 4-12 that are scheduled for one day or longer will have at least one male and one female chaperone.~~ Sponsoring teachers and principals must provide training and information to chaperones commensurate to the nature of the field trip or excursion.
- 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 or excursion including a written description of the plan for supervision and the expectation for student conduct will be provided to parents.
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances by chaperones or district employees is not permitted during the operation and supervision of field trips or excursions. Medications taken under prescription of a licensed physician are permitted. Safety and security of students is the focus of this regulation.
- For approved field trips and excursions, 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 in appropriate behavior, etc. Updated emergency and health forms or summary lists will be collected and copied for use by chaperones. At least two operable telephone numbers will be provided for each participant. Copies of all information will also be filed in the school.
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Transportation

- Transportation for field trips and 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 or 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. Approval for use of school buses will require the completion of the TPSD Request for Use of School Buses.
- Submission of the TPSD Request for School Buses must meet the same timelines as those established for securing approval of the Superintendent or designee for the trip.
- Use of charter or commercial buses for transportation of students on field trips or excursions is 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 district requirements in terms of drivers smoking on the bus, abiding by established speed limits and laws, and cooperating with school officials to achieve a safe and enjoyable trip. Charter bus contracts require approval by the Superintendent and Board of Trustees. 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 by noon of the working day that is one week before the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

General

- Teachers and principals who sponsor field trips and excursions are responsible for planning and operation of field trips and excursions that address the safety and security of students while providing enhanced learning opportunities. Application of the preceding regulations to the nature of the particular field trip or excursion shall be documented and included in the operational plan for the field trip and excursion.

Cross Ref:

JLIA SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

IJOA-E1 FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS: REQUEST FORM AND PLANNING
ATTACHMENTS

IJOA-E2 FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS: CHECKLIST

IJOA-E3 FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS: REQUEST FORM

IJOA-E4 FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS: PARENT PERMISSION FORM