

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: **6000**
CATEGORY: **Instruction**
POLICY CODE: **6153/Field Trips**

FIELD TRIPS

Policy Statement

The Board of Education recognizes that field trips for students, when properly planned, executed, evaluated, and used as a device for teaching and learning, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of the District. Field trips provide students with first-hand experiences, and are an effective and worthwhile means of learning. They require appropriate planning and preparation based on the regulations of this policy.

For purposes of this policy, the Board defines “field trip” as any school-sponsored journey by a group of students away from school premises under the supervision of a lead teacher and other chaperones:

- School-sponsored educational field trips should be directly related to or be an extension of classroom learning experiences. Pre-teaching, planning, and evaluation should always be part of any given field trip. This category of field trips includes competitive/performance field trips by academic, athletic, and performing arts teams and groups participating in competition or performance, with the exception of trips related to regularly scheduled interscholastic athletic contests.
- School groups may plan trips for cultural/enrichment purposes.
- School groups may plan trips for recreational purposes. Participation may be limited to the members of the sponsoring organization. Overnight recreational field trips are prohibited.

For purposes of this policy, “field trip” does not include a trip related to regularly scheduled interscholastic athletic contests; such trips are administered by the Athletic Director in accordance with Board of Education Policy 5150, “Interscholastic Athletics.”

The Board cannot and does not recognize nor take responsibility for non-school-sponsored trips or tours. Any preparation for, publicity of, or communication of non-school-sponsored trips or tours shall not occur during school hours or in school buildings, and no school materials may be used to prepare, publicize, or communicate any aspect of such trips or tours.

Prior to seeking approval for any field trip, the proposed lead teacher must acquaint himself/herself with this policy and all its regulations.

Adopted: 4/1995
Revised: 5/22/2002, 1/8/2009,
10/15/2013, 8/28/2018

References

- Connecticut General Statutes § 10-235

- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 1212.1: Volunteers
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 1324: Fund Raising
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 3541.44: Use of Privately-Owned Vehicles
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 5131: Student Standard of Conduct
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 5141.21: Administration of Medication by School Personnel
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 5150: Interscholastic Athletics

Regulations

I. Field Trip Approval Process

The District will develop and maintain forms for teachers to seek approval for field trips. In addition to details related to logistics, costs, funding, chaperones, and trip cancellation insurance, the approval request form shall require a written statement of a trip's purpose and objectives. All field trips require administrative approval as detailed below:

- The approval request form for any day trip occurring solely within the State of Connecticut must be submitted to the appropriate building principal and the Assistant Superintendent at least 30 days in advance of the departure date, with all sections of the required approval request form completed. Approval by the appropriate building principal and the Assistant Superintendent is required.
- The approval request form for any day trip requiring travel to another state must be submitted to the building principal and the Assistant Superintendent at least 90 days in advance of the departure date, with all sections of the required approval request form completed. Approval by the appropriate building principal and the Assistant Superintendent is required.
- The approval request form for any overnight trip must be submitted to the building principal and the Assistant Superintendent at least 90 days in advance of the departure date, with all sections of the required approval request form completed. Approval by the appropriate building principal and the Assistant Superintendent is required; in addition, any requested overnight trip requires approval of the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education, to whom the approval request form should be promptly forwarded.
- The approval request form for any trip involving international travel must be submitted to the building principal and the Assistant Superintendent at least 90 days in advance of the departure date, and sooner if possible, with all sections of the required approval request form completed. Approval by the appropriate building principal and the Assistant Superintendent is required; in addition, any requested trip involving international travel requires approval of the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education, to whom the approval request form should be promptly forwarded.

The time requirements for submission of the approval request form may be waived by the Superintendent of Schools in any specific case of an academic, athletic, or performing arts team or group participating in competition or performance.

Approval of all field trips shall be conditional, and may be revoked at any time by the building principal, the Assistant Superintendent, the Superintendent of Schools, or the Board of Education based on a change in circumstances, whether man-made or natural, that warrants cancellation in the interest of safety of students and/or staff.

II. General Field Trip Guidelines

A. Selection of Sites and Accommodations

The teacher seeking to lead a field trip must be familiar with each site to be visited. Sites should be handicapped-accessible whenever possible.

Any overnight trip requires appropriate review of all potential accommodations, including fire prevention precautions. Accommodations should be handicapped-accessible whenever possible.

B. Selection of Transportation

All travel arrangements shall be made at the lowest reasonable cost. The use of a travel agent is discretionary, but it should be remembered that, under certain conditions, use of a travel agent can reduce the cost of a trip.

During the planning process, the Transportation Coordinator shall be consulted for all proposed bus transportation. Student transportation via bus shall conform to all relevant Board of Education policies and state statutes. Specialized transportation for students with disabilities, especially those who are physically disabled, may be required.

The Board recognizes that there are times including special incidental, unplanned, and/or emergency circumstances when a small number of students may need to be transported, and that buses may not be the most cost-effective or environmentally-friendly method of transport. To this end, the Transportation Department has several vans available for use. Students should not be transported in a privately-owned vehicle unless there is no other means of transportation. Regulations for the use of privately-owned vehicles are detailed in Board of Education Policy 3541.44, "Use of Privately-Owned Vehicles." Students who will be transported in a privately-owned vehicle by a parent, student, or volunteer must have written parental permission and appropriate insurance. Prior authorization is required from the Superintendent and/or his/her designee for use of privately-owned vehicles by Trumbull Public School employees except in emergency situations. Connecticut law requires anyone who transports a school student to or from school, an athletic event, or an extracurricular activity to have the appropriate driver's license, whether the vehicle used is a school bus, activity van, or passenger car.

C. Student Participation

Following field trip approval as detailed in this policy and its regulations, the lead teacher must utilize forms developed and maintained by the District to inform each student's parent/guardian of the purpose, objectives, logistics, costs, and funding of the planned trip, and to obtain permission by each student's parent/guardian for the student to participate. No student will be permitted to participate without a permission form fully completed in writing with original signature of parent/guardian. In signing

the permission form, the parent/guardian accepts responsibility for incurring of any financial costs related to a trip cancelled for any reason and/or any unanticipated financial costs related to the student's participation in the trip, including medical care or additional transportation costs required.

In advance of the trip, the lead teacher must brief parents/guardians and students on all relevant trip details, including special conditions.

The administration reserves the right to deny participation in a field trip for any student based upon a record of inappropriate behavior and/or poor school attendance.

D. Costs

Students may be assessed for the cost of field trips, including transportation, lodging, meals, and entry fees. Fundraising activities, consistent with Board of Education Policy 1324, "Fundraising," may be used to defray the cost of a field trip. Parents/guardians of students for whom payment would constitute a hardship are encouraged to contact the appropriate building principal for possible assistance. A field trip's lead teacher must collect and process funds for field trips in accordance with procedures established by the Business Office.

E. Planning Supervision of Students

Each field trip requires an adequate number of chaperones, each of whom must be an adult over the age of 18 not currently enrolled in the Trumbull Public Schools or any other school district. For liability purposes, chaperones will be covered by District policies. Specific chaperones for each trip must be approved by the building principal, and, when not District employees, must comply with the regulations of Board of Education Policy 1212.1, "Volunteers."

Determination and approval of specific chaperones will take into account factors including, but not limited to: the appropriate balance between District employees and volunteers for the proposed trip; the appropriate balance between genders of chaperones in relation to genders of students on the proposed trip; and the appropriate age and experience of chaperones for the proposed trip.

Chaperone ratios must adhere to the regulations detailed below:

- A day trip occurring solely within the State of Connecticut which involves students in Pre-Kindergarten through grade 5 requires 1 adult chaperone per every 5 students.
- A day trip occurring solely within the State of Connecticut which involves students in grade 6 through grade 8 requires 1 chaperone per every 10 students.
- A day trip occurring solely within the State of Connecticut which involves students in grade 9 through grade 12 requires 1 chaperone per every 15 students.

- Any other trip (those requiring travel to another state, those that are overnight, and those involving international travel) for students of any grade requires 1 chaperone per every 10 students.
- Higher ratios of chaperones to students may be required by the administration or the Board based on particular trip circumstances.

F. Coordination with Food Services

For a field trip that will overlap the hours when lunch is served on a particular day or days, the trip's lead teacher must notify the school cafeteria manager at least one week prior to the trip. Appropriate arrangements for students receiving free or reduced-price meals will be made.

G. Coordination with Nursing Services

A field trip's lead teacher must provide the school nurse a list of students attending the trip at least one week prior to the trip. The school nurse will determine any precautions and/or trained personnel required for the field trip in order for the health needs of students to be accommodated. The school nurse may determine that the health needs of students require that personnel trained in the administration of medication, emergency care, and anaphylaxis must attend the field trip in order for it to proceed.

Prior to the trip's departure, the school nurse will review with the lead teacher all relevant student health needs, including all relevant Individualized Health Care Plans (IHCPs) and Emergency Care Plans (ECPs).

The school nurse will also review all relevant student medication(s) with the lead teacher. This shall include the procedural aspects of medication administration, desired effect and possible side effects of the medication, the safe handling and storage of the medication, and necessary documentation of the administration of medication(s). Any administration of medication on a field trip must be clearly defined (i.e., through signed medical orders, signed parent/guardian permission forms, properly labeled pharmaceutical containers, etc.), and must comply with Board of Education Policy 5141.21, "Administration of Medication by School Personnel." All medication needed during a trip must be given to the trip's lead teacher, who may provide it to another chaperone who is an employee of the Board; the medication must remain in the lead teacher or the other chaperone's possession during the course of the trip until such time as it is used. Students requiring medication must always be in the company of the adult responsible for administering the medication.

H. Coordination with Pupil Personnel Services

A field trip's lead teacher must provide the school psychologist a list of students attending the trip at least one week prior to the trip. Prior to the trip's departure, the

school psychologist will review with the lead teacher all relevant details from student Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans. Additional planning for children with disabilities, especially those who are physically disabled, may be required; a child's special education case manager, teacher, and/or paraprofessional may be consulted.

I. Implementing Supervision of Students

Chaperones must be briefed in advance of the trip by the lead teacher on all relevant details, including the trip's purpose and objectives, special conditions, procedures, pertinent medical and dietary information, responsibilities, and expected behavior.

All parent/guardian field trip permission forms shall be taken on the trip by the lead teacher, with copies remaining in the school's main office. Following the conclusion of the trip, the original permission forms are to be retained by the building principal for one full calendar year.

All Trumbull Board of Education policies apply during all times of field trips, including Board of Education Policy 5131, "Student Standard of Conduct." Students should be briefed prior to and during the trip on particular conduct expectations as appropriate.

The safety and security of all students during field trips is paramount. Ongoing student attendance and monitoring by chaperones is required, and under no circumstances may an individual student be allowed to leave a group unaccompanied. Small groups of students may obtain permission to leave the presence of a chaperone for brief periods as appropriate, but should remain within proximity of the chaperone, with a mechanism by which to contact the chaperone in the event of an emergency.

For a field trip requiring overnight accommodations, lead teachers and chaperones are required to review the accommodation's fire prevention precautions with students prior to bedtime, including conducting a fire drill as appropriate.

All chaperones are considered "on call" in case of emergencies at all times, including during nighttime hours. For periods when a chaperone may be "off duty," the chaperone must inform the lead teacher of his/her planned whereabouts and remain accessible. All Trumbull Board of Education personnel policies apply during all times of field trips.

For an overnight trip, the lead teacher must consult in advance with the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee regarding appropriate nighttime supervision.

The field trip's approved itinerary is expected to be followed. If unavoidable changes occur, the lead teacher must notify the building principal as soon as possible.

In the event of an emergency during a field trip, the lead teacher and chaperones shall take the reasonable emergency measures deemed necessary. Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible via the contact information provided on the parent/guardian field trip permission form; emergency contacts will be notified if parents/guardians cannot be reached.

Any unexpected occurrences, including medical emergencies, must be reported by the lead teacher to the building principal as soon as possible.

J. Insurance Requirements

In all instances, the lead teacher of a field trip is responsible for ensuring appropriate insurance coverage by all transportation carriers, and obtaining copies of certificates demonstrating such.

Each student and adult participant on a field trip must be covered by insurance that includes accident, sickness, personal property coverage, coverage against injuries or damages to all persons or property whether or not associated with the field trip, and all other full liability coverage.

Participants in field trips must be provided information on trip cancellation insurance when relevant. The Board of Education does not assume any responsibility for refunding monies to students for trips that are cancelled for any reason, nor to pursue such reimbursement from travel agents or trip insurance carriers under any circumstances.

Insurance obligations for situations involving privately-owned vehicles are detailed in Board of Education Policy 3541.44, "Use of Privately-Owned Vehicles."

K. Additional Requirements

If swimming will be included or may be possible in a field trip, that must be noted on the approval request form, and must receive specific approval by the Superintendent of Schools. If a field trip has not received such approval, there shall be no swimming permitted at any time during the trip. If a field trip has received such approval, swimming shall occur only if a duly-certified lifeguard is on duty.

The acceptance of any gratuities, discounts, and/or gifts for personal use resulting from field trips is prohibited. Any gifts, gratuities, or promotional items provided by travel companies will become the property of the District and will be used for the benefit of the trip or the school.

A lead teacher entering into any contract with a travel agent or tour company is advised to have the contract reviewed by the building principal to ensure that the contract satisfies Board of Education requirements and by the Business Manager to ensure that the contract provides sufficient protection against liability.

Students unable to participate in a field trip for whatever reason shall be provided an alternative educational experience during the school day hours of the trip.

L. Post-Field Trip Evaluation

Following its conclusion, a field trip should be evaluated by students, teachers, and administrators, and follow-up classroom activities, as appropriate, should be implemented. Lead teachers may be required to submit a written report of the trip, including any unexpected occurrences. Any unexpended funds are to be returned to parents/guardians by the lead teacher based on consultation with the building principal.