



## Field Trip Policy

Field trips are an integral part of the curriculum at our school. Our students are therefore expected to participate in this meaningful, experiential education. This policy provides the structure for accessibility, protection and safety of all our students.

Whenever a school event happens off campus, there's heightened risk that a student, or even multiple students, could be injured or become sick. There are some essential questions to consider when planning a trip.

How can the school keep students safe during school outings while also protecting us from the related liabilities?

How can the school insure that school rules, policies, and expectations are clearly communicated to all parties?

How do trip leaders/chaperones communicate when something happens on a trip?

There are four considerations:

1. We must always have a clear safety policy for field trips and outings, including athletic contests. Key questions such as:

- Who will be responsible for overseeing student safety during trips?
- What steps should be taken before trips to improve student safety?
- What safety measures can be taken during outings?
- What is the planned, fixed agenda every day?
- How many chaperones are needed based on student trip attendance to help ensure safety?
- How are chaperones trained in advance?
- What will be the protocols if a student gets injured?

2. Consider safety measures for each outing specifically. The types of injuries that could be incurred depend on the outing type. Of course, bus rides and other transportation to and from the destination pose their own risks. But going to a museum is very different from going to an amusement park in terms of the potential hazards involved. Going ten miles away is very different than a plane trip overseas. We need to consider in advance the types of hazards involved with each particular outing and plan

for how cope with them. All chaperones should also be given specific instructions for what is expected of them and what to do if a student is injured. Such troubleshooting also helps instructors and school staff think through important trip specifics, such as what types of clothing and other gear students should bring on a trip. (For example, school staff will likely want to remind students to wear sunscreen if the outing involves a long day in the sun.)

3. Keep students accountable, too. Laying out rules for students during outings in advance can help prevent injuries. For example, depending on the outing destination and age of the student, it might be required that students stick together in groups of two or larger—or that everyone in on the trip always stays together. Giving students specifics on what they will need to bring on the trip to make it comfortable and safe, such as what to wear—or not to wear—can also protect against injuries.

4. Use our carefully drafted consent forms. Having parents or guardians sign a carefully drafted and detailed permission form that waives the school from liability if injuries occur during outings can help protect it from legal risks. However, permission forms aren't foolproof: If a student gets injured due to the school's negligence—say because a parent feels there was inadequate supervision during the trip—the school could still be held liable. Parents must receive and sign forms well in advance of any trip, giving them adequate time for review and consideration.

Advanced planning is a big part of keeping students safe during field trips and protecting the school from liability. The more school staff and chaperones are prepared and know what risks are involved, the better equipped they will be.

The following guidelines are set to implement the planning and participation in our field trips. All trips will have:

1. An approved named lead teacher who is responsible for the planning of, and decision-making during the trip
2. A completed approval form with clear breakdown of cost, curriculum links and an itinerary handed to the Lower School Principal at least four weeks before the field trip begins, prior to the permission slip being sent to parents
3. The Lead Teacher receives approval for the field trip from the Division Head.
4. Once approved by the Division Head, the Lead Teacher will inform the Chief Financial Officer, Food Service Director, and Special Area Teachers.
5. The Lead Teacher will make sure that there will be more than one approved chaperone. At least one male and one female chaperone on overnight trips.
6. The Lead Teacher will maintain adequate supervision at all times. Parents may serve as chaperones but are not allowed to transport students other than their own child.

7. The Lead Teacher will assure access and availability to all students in that course/grade level who are in “good standing”
8. The lead teacher must meet with the Chief Financial Officer to discuss transportation options before finalizing transportation. A maximum of fourteen passengers per school bus and the number of students in any other vehicle must be in line with the vehicle’s insurance.
9. Parental written permission and emergency medical release must be obtained for each child.
10. The Lead Teacher must have communication with the school via a cell phone during the trip.
11. The Lead Teacher will carry emergency medical release forms and student medical information on the field trip.
12. The Lead Teacher will leave a list of all students on the trip with the front office before leaving school.
13. The Lead Teachers must complete a bus sheet and check the bus sheet at the end of the trip.
14. Feedback should be collected by the Lead Teacher from parents following each field trip.