Field Trips

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee to approve field trips for students. A field trip is defined as a school-sponsored trip for students, which is a first-hand educational experience to supplement class activities away from the campus.

Activity Trips

"Activity trips" are trips sponsored by school activity clubs or trips that are non-educational in nature and are used to reward academic, athletic or behavioral accomplishments. The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designee to approve activity trips that are non-educational in nature providing that the trips have been defined and structured as part of the educational environment. Activity trips require insurance.

Unauthorized Travel: Commercial Trips

The school district does not sponsor commercially promoted student trips. Commercially promoted student trips are defined as those sponsored by commercial travel firms for profit. Such trips fail to meet the criteria for field or activity trips and, therefore, will neither be supported nor sponsored by the District. District employees or students who chose to represent companies promoting student trips will be considered agents of that company. Companies and their agents) that promote student trips are not permitted to use school district property and/or other school resources to promote such trips. A company or its agent(s) sponsoring student trips will be responsible and hence liable for any and all accidents, injuries, and lawsuits, et al., resulting from its student trips.

Parent Permission

Students going on field trips to supplement class activities or activity trips must have the approval of the principal in advance and the written consent of the parent/guardian prior to the trip.

District Form APS-49

Signed permission forms will be in the possession of the sponsor who accompanies the students on the trip. A list of students who have signed permission forms will remain in the school office during the trip. The list should indicate which students with permission forms were absent. It is the teacher's responsibility to arrange for supervision of students who did not provide signed permission forms.

Field Trip Expenses

In the event that participation in a field trip or excursion is mandatory for a class requirement and a student may be excluded from participating due to lack of sufficient funds, the trip sponsor may utilize fund raising sources and/or assign that student with an alternative assignment that will take the place of the field trip. Alternative assignments must consist of useful work related to valid instructional goals. They may not be punitive or burdensome in length of time or type of work required. Expenses for student participation in a field trip or excursion to any state, District of Columbia, or a foreign country authorized by the district shall not be paid with school district funds. Expenses of instructors,
chaperones, and other personnel participating in a field trip or excursion may be paid from school district funds, as well as incidental expenses for the use of school district transportation.

**Attendance**

The attendance or participation of a student on a field trip or excursion authorized by the district shall be considered attendance for the purpose of crediting attendance for apportionment from the average daily attendance counts in the fiscal year. Credited attendance resulting from such field trip or excursion shall be limited to the amount of attendance which would have accrued had the students not been engaged in the field trip or excursion. Credited attendance shall not exceed 10 school days except in the case of students participating in a field trip in connection with courses of instruction or school related educational activities and which are not social cultural, athletic or music activities.

**Approval Requirements**

**Within APS District boundaries:**

- Written request on Form AD-14, 5 days in advance for principal approval.

**In-State (Outside of APS District Boundaries)**

- Written request on Form AD-14, 10 days in advance for principal and appropriate superintendent/designee approval. Information copies will be forwarded to Transportation and Risk Management.

**Out-of State:**

- Written request on Form AD-14, 10 days in advance or principal and appropriate superintendent/designee approval. Information copies will be forwarded to Risk Management.

**Out-of-Country:**

- Written request on Form AD-14, 20 days in advance for principal and appropriate superintendent/designee approval. Information copies will be forwarded to Risk Management.

- Approval of international travel will be subject to United States Department of State travel advisories and warnings. Travel warnings are issued when the State Department decides based on all relevant information, to recommend that Americans avoid travel to a certain country. No district sponsored international travel will be approved if warnings have been issued for the specific country or countries of travel or if a worldwide caution has been issued at the time of request for approval. The trip will be canceled if warnings or cautions to specific countries are issued between the approval date and the departure of the trip.

- Participants in out-of-country travel are required to purchase Foreign Travel Insurance through the Risk Management Department.

- The purpose of out-of-country field trips is to familiarize students with the language, history, geography, natural sciences, and other studies relative to the district's course of study for such
students. If student field trips involve awarding of credit, follow the Procedural Directive regarding Alternative Methods of Earning Credits.

**Transporting Students**

A. If the required mode of transportation is not adhered to, the field trip will not be approved.
   1. Within APS District boundaries: Preferred mode of transportation is contracted bus.
   2. In-State (Outside of APS District Boundaries): Preferred mode of transportation is contracted bus.
   3. Out-of State: Required mode of transportation is commercial carrier. Upon reaching their destination, commercial carrier is the preferred mode of transportation. Airport/hotel shuttles may be utilized for transportation to and from the airport. Rental cars will be allowed provided optional liability and loss/damage insurance is purchased on each vehicle, each vehicle is driven by a licensed chaperone, and has a sufficient number of seat belts for all passengers. Each chaperone that will be driving a rented vehicle must obey all local traffic laws and have a valid driver’s license. No vans that seat more than nine passengers will be allowed. A signed release from each parent/guardian authorizing their student to ride in a rented vehicle and driven by a licensed chaperone is required. All of these guidelines must be verified by the principal/sponsor prior to departure of the out state field trip.
   4. Out-of-Country: Required mode of transportation is commercial carrier.

B. In the event that a contracted bus is not available or a viable option for travel within APS District boundaries or In-State (Outside of APS District Boundaries), everyone, including employees and chaperones transporting students in a privately owned vehicle must:
   1. Have a valid driver’s license;
   2. Insure their vehicle is in safe operating condition;
   3. Carry liability insurance for bodily injury and property damage as required by State law;
   4. Obey all traffic laws;
   5. Have available and use seat belts or child restraint devices for all students transported as required by State law;
   6. Sign a certification of compliance for the above to be kept on file by the principal or other administrator in charge of the activity. INS for 72E should be used for this purpose.
   7. Successfully pass a background check through APS Human Resources.

C. When transporting small groups of students in-state, out of APS district boundaries, small groups limited to twenty persons, including students and chaperones, will be allowed to take no more than four private vehicles.

D. The use of passenger vans (9 passengers or greater) to transport students is not authorized.
Chaperone Minimum Standards

At least one member of the school staff shall be the primary chaperone for student field and activity trips; however, if sufficient staff are not available for the remaining, required number of chaperones, the next preferred would be parents or guardians. It is important to advise parents or guardians that non-school aged children will not be allowed, since chaperones will need to provide full attention to the students on the trip. Principals will approve a list of chaperones prior to each field trip. Principals and trip sponsors are responsible for the reliability of non-school staff chaperones.

The chaperone minimum standard for general education student supervision is:

- Elementary School - 1 chaperone for every 7 students
- Middle School - 1 chaperone for every 10 students
- High School - 1 chaperone for every 15 students

These are minimum standards; higher chaperone/student ratios are encouraged to reduce the risk of student injury/accident.

The chaperone minimum standard for students with disabilities requires higher chaperone/student ratios in order to reduce the risk of student injury/incident. Some students may need 1 to 1 supervision, whereas supervision ratios for others may be decreased as per the individual student's mobility, mental capacity and behavior. The principal and teacher working with a particular group of students are the best authority regarding the appropriate ratio of supervision.

Chaperones having unsupervised access to students including those transporting students in private vehicles must successfully pass an APS background check.

Activity Trip Insurance

Activity Trip Insurance must be purchased through the Risk Management Department. Current policy limits per injury are:

- $250,000 medical coverage
- $10,000 death and dismemberment

Instructions for purchasing Activity Trip Insurance:

A. Submit a written request for purchasing "Event Insurance" that includes:

1. Date of trip
2. Time of trip
3. Destination
4. Teacher's name
5. Number of students
6. Grade level

B. Requests and payment MUST be received in the Risk Management Office at least 3 days prior to the activity.

C. No cash or personal checks can be accepted. Submit school checks to Risk Management.

D. Money cannot be refunded unless the entire group cancels.

E. Risk Management will provide FAX or mail confirmation to the school upon receipt of request and payment and confirmation of coverage.

For current premium charge per student, contact the Risk Management Department.