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TO: Property & Liability Members
FROM: Becky Slaughter ARM, Executive Director
DATE: August 23, 2011

SUBJECT: *** HEADS UP ***** PARENT PERMISSION FORMS**

CRSIG has received several requests recently to review permission forms used for excursions, field trips and student self-drivers. In several cases, forms have been sent out via back to school packets that include annual permission forms for parents to sign.

ANNUAL FORMS:

CRSIG strongly recommends that you work with your sites to eliminate the use of these forms. This is a practice that gained momentum a number of years ago in an attempt to streamline the amount of paperwork separate permission forms generated. The problem with it is that it constitutes an unreasonable assumption that the parent agrees to give the school wide-open permission in the fall for an event/s he/she doesn't know about 1-8 months later. A recent form I reviewed included language that the district would issue field trip specific forms throughout the year, but use the annual form if the field trip specific form was not returned in time. This does not adequately notify a parent of the date, type and location of an event in which their child will participate. In addition, it does not collect the specific permission needed to protect you with Ed Code immunity for the specific event.

SIGNED FORMS:

There are also some sites who have notified parents that they will accept verbal permission for a student to attend a field trip if the permission form is not received. **CRSIG strongly recommends that you accept no less than a written permission form signed by a parent or guardian for student participation in excursions/field trips and athletic participation.** This is because a verbal conversation with a parent whose child does not have a signed form would not be adequate to protect you with Ed Code immunity. The parent needs to acknowledge in a reasonable fashion, their understanding of the immunity provisions and agreement to hold the district harmless. A verbal conversation does not meet this standard.

NOTE: At this end of this month you will receive the 2011 Risk Management Manual for each of your site administrators. This booklet will be provided each year and contains the most current forms (also available at www.crsig.com in Word format) we recommend that you use. Please also note that all of the CRSIG forms were reviewed by our legal defense counsel last year in an effort to strengthen the forms you use based on tort liability cases that have been tried.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give me a call at 579-7535.