

FIELD TRIP REVIEW & APPROVAL

Discussion:

Consistent with the goals for field trips and excursions described in Ed. Code 35330, the CRSIG recognizes that school-sponsored trips are an important component of a student's development and supplement and enrich the classroom learning experience.

While field trips can be a valuable enhancement of the educational program, they also create liability exposure for the District, including those involving transportation and hazardous conditions at the trip destinations. While Ed. Code offers some degree of immunity protection, the District should always keep in mind that the immunity does not preclude a party from filing suit against the district.

The District should evaluate the purpose and goal of each proposed trip compared to the liability exposures to determine if the trip is appropriate for the District to sponsor. For example, trips providing educational benefits (geological dig, exploring for plants for a biology class, etc.) may warrant accepting the liability exposures, whereas a trip involving recreational (non-educational) high risk activities (bungee jumping, splunking, surfing, etc.) should not be allowed by the District.

Evaluation and Approval Steps:

In order to evaluate and approve a field trip, the individual proposing the trip should submit to the school administrator a summary of the proposed activity. In evaluating the approval of a proposed field trip, the school administrator responsible for approving the trip should take the following steps:

Step 1: Evaluation - Determine if the trip is well planned and makes sense:

1. What is the nature of the trip/activity?
2. What is the purpose of the trip/activity?
3. What is the educational value of the trip/activity, and is it the type of trip or event that falls within the District guidelines for sponsorship?
4. What types of student involvement will be included in the trip/activity?
5. Where will the trip/activity be located?
6. Who is responsible for the trip/activity, and how will it be coordinated and managed?
7. What are the hazards and exposures inherent in the trip/activity?
8. How will transportation be managed?
9. What types of communication with parents/students/staff will be needed?
10. Is the trip/activity covered by the school district's insurance?
11. Could a less risky trip/activity be substituted?
12. Is there an alternate sponsor for the event?
13. Should the District offer to assist an alternative sponsor?

Step 2: Approval - Determine If The Trip Meet District Requirements

- 1) Consult with Board Policy regarding school sponsored trips and transportation.
- 2) Ensure that planning by staff has included attention to student safety, objectives of instruction, the most effective use of instructional time, the distance from school, district and student expense, and transportation and supervision requirements.
- 3) Verify that the trip is conducted in connection with the district's course of study or school-related social, educational, cultural, athletic, school band activities, or other extracurricular or co--curricular activities. Trips for the sake of recreational exposure are not appropriate.
- 4) Verify that insurance exists for the trip as a covered event under CRSIG or by an outside vendor. Verification may be achieved for questionable trips by contacting the CRSIG Broker or office. What types of insurance is required or desirable? What types of risk-transfer documents should be required?
- 5) Verify that any transportation provided complies with Board Policy.
- 6) Verify that Parent Permission Forms and any transportation related forms are prepared and adequate to protect the school.
- 7) Verify that any parent or volunteer forms have been prepared and are adequate to protect the school.
- 8) No field trip should be authorized if any student would be excluded from participation because of a lack of sufficient funds. (Education Code 35330)

Additional Considerations

Teacher/Chaperone Experience Requirements:

Individual(s) serving as Chaperones who actively participate in the event should be experienced and/or qualified to do so. For example, if the Chaperone/Teacher is going to snow-ski or snowboard—they should be a competent skier or rider. Skill levels of all Chaperones should be assessed by the lead Chaperone or Teacher before the field trip to ensure adequate supervision will occur during the activity.

Field Trip & Special Activities Transportation:

Field trip transportation should be limited to either district owned vehicles or commercial fleet rentals whenever possible.

Transportation for all trips should be limited to:

- District School Buses
- District Vans
- Parents driving own children (No additional family members or friends should be allowed.)

- Commercial fleet rentals
- Students whose parents are not driving to the field trip should be transported by district vehicle.
- Siblings of students who are not part of the class for which the field trip is scheduled, should not be allowed to attend the field trip.

Chaperone/Parent Volunteer Preparation:

It is important that chaperones are prepared for emergencies, particularly medical emergencies. It is prudent to identify emergency care facilities prior to the activity. Education Code 35331 specifies the District's responsibilities in regard to provision of or notification of parents/guardian of the availability of medical insurance.

Staff and Chaperone/Parent Volunteer Conduct:

All staff members and Chaperones should be held to higher standards of conduct than students and should be provided with the conduct expected standards in writing. (Eg. No use of alcohol, controlled substances, separation from students, speeding while driving, etc.)

Student Conduct:

It is also important that sound and enforceable rules for the conduct of students, supervisors, and chaperones be known and agreed to by all parties. It is especially important that rules pertaining to student's use of alcohol or other controlled substances be specified, along with additional guidelines for appropriate deportment. Both parents and students should acknowledge receipt of such rules and their knowledge of the consequences of infractions.

PROCEDURE: Staff requesting approval for a trip/activity and Administrators considering approval should use the Filed Trip: Approval Form in the last section of the guidelines.