

FIELD TRIPSEffective: October 12, 2023

I. General

- A. All Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) policies and school rules are applicable and in effect during field trips.
- B. Students should report any concerns about violation of policy or HCPSS Student Code of Conduct concern during or after a field trip.
- C. Planning and Approval
 - 1. All field trips will be aligned with a field trip category (Curriculum, Culturally-Related, Community Building, Service learning, Personal Growth and Leadership Development) as outlined in Section VI.D. of the policy.
 - 2. Field trips should reflect diverse experiences and opportunities for students.
 - 3. The Field Trip Travel Request Form will be submitted to the school administrator for approval a minimum of forty (40) calendar days prior to the distribution of the Permission Form for Student Field Trip.

Requests that are not received within the designated time period may be subject to denial.

- 4. When field trips are being planned, consideration must be given to families who may not be able to afford payment for the trip, while maintaining sensitivity and confidentiality. A concerted effort must be made to include all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, by minimizing costs through fundraising, donations, or payment options.
- 5. The Permission Form for Student Field Trip must be fully approved prior to its distribution. Full approval is a three (3) step process that requires approval from the school-based administrator, approval from the Office of Safety and Security, and approval from the Division of School Management and Instructional Leadership. The Teacher-In-Charge may distribute The Permission Form for Student Field Trip only when it has received full approval.
- 6. A field trip will not be conducted until the Office of Safety and Security and the Purchasing Office approves all language in the contract. Contracts will be

submitted for review and approval a minimum of eighty-two (82) calendar days prior to any contractual deadline.

- D. Teachers should plan and execute appropriate pre- or post-field trip activities to reinforce the purpose of the trip.
- E. Safety, emergency, and security procedures will be developed and communicated for all field trips.
- F. Student health needs will be coordinated with HCPSS school-based health services employees two weeks prior to the field trip.
- G. Extended Day Field Trips
 - 1. For elementary school students, the planned return time will be no later than 7:00 p.m. when school is in session the next day. Exceptions will be considered for extenuating circumstances subject to the approval of the Superintendent/designee.
 - 2. For secondary school students, the planned return time will be no later than 10:00 p.m. when school is in session the next day. Exceptions will be considered for extenuating circumstances subject to the approval of the Superintendent/designee.
- H. Overnight Field Trips
 - 1. Overnight field trips are limited to middle school and high school students.
 - 2. Overnight field trips will involve no more than three (3) school days unless approved in advance by the Superintendent/designee.
 - 3. The planned return time will be no later than 10:00 p.m. when school is in session the next day. Exceptions will be considered for extenuating circumstances subject to the approval of the Superintendent/designee.
- I. Specific Provisions for Overnight Field Trips
 - 1. There will be at least one male HCPSS employee to accompany the students when male students are participating in a field trip.
 - 2. There will be at least one female HCPSS employee to accompany the students when female students are participating in a field trip.
 - 3. Overnight field trips will adhere to the HCPSS Guidelines for Supporting Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students.

4. The hotel or lodging facility address and phone number must be included in the itinerary.
 5. Nightly curfew will be established each day by the Teacher-In-Charge. Students are to be in their own room at the designated time.
 6. Overnight field trip chaperone ratios will be in accordance with Section L. of these implementation procedures.
 7. Chaperones are considered to be supervising students at all times during an overnight field trip.
 8. Chaperones must conduct at least one routine student room check after curfew to ensure that students are in their assigned room and that no prohibited items are in plain view.
 - a. A routine student room check only includes a cursory check of the room from the doorway. A routine room check does not include a search of luggage or personal items.
 - b. Routine room checks will be conducted by chaperone(s) who are the same gender as the students.
 - c. It is preferable that room checks are performed by a pair of chaperones.
 - d. If students are not in their assigned rooms and/or if prohibited items are in plain view, the chaperone is to immediately inform the Teacher-In-Charge.
- J. The Teacher-In-Charge will be responsible for:
1. Planning a field trip in accordance with Section II.A. of these implementation procedures.
 2. Applying for administrative approval using the required Field Trip Travel Request Form and Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet.
 3. Coordinating and executing field trip training and details.
 4. Attending the trip.
 5. Arranging for supervision of students. Only an approved chaperone can provide supervision to students on a field trip. A chaperone can be a parent of a participating student, an adult age 21 or older, or an HCPSS employee. Chaperones must complete the Child Abuse and Neglect Training, be processed through the visitor management system, and be approved by the principal to accompany and supervise students during the entirety of the field trip.

- K. A student's participation in a field trip requires a parent signature on the Permission Form for Student Field Trip. If a trip is rescheduled, a new Permission Form for Student Field Trip parent signature will be required.
- L. Chaperones will be assigned as follows:
 - 1. Elementary school level: a minimum of one chaperone for every eight (8) students.
 - 2. Middle school level: a minimum of one chaperone for every fifteen (15) students.
 - 3. High school level: a minimum of one chaperone for every twenty-five (25) students.
 - 4. Overnight field trips middle school level: a minimum of one chaperone for every fifteen (15) students.
 - 5. Overnight field trips high school level: a minimum of one chaperone for every twenty (20) students.
- M. Parents will be notified if there is a need to drop off students early or pick them up late. For late arrivals, parents will pick up their child within fifteen (15) minutes of the return to school. Supervision of students will be maintained by HCPSS employees until all students have left for home.
- N. Students participating in a field trip will have the opportunity and the responsibility to complete missed schoolwork. Students will have an equal number of days as the field trip to complete make up work.
- O. The following apply in inclement weather or emergency situations:
 - 1. At the point of origin: (i.e. Howard County)
 - a. If schools are closed, field trips are cancelled.
 - b. For a delayed opening, field trips may either be:
 - i. Cancelled, or
 - ii. Postponed until the official opening of the school day or another day.
 - 2. At the destination or points of travel to that destination:
 - a. Field trips may be cancelled.
 - b. Field trips may be postponed.

3. The Superintendent/designee, in consultation with the Office of Safety and Security, will make weather decisions on a case by case basis.
 4. The HCPSS will not be responsible for any financial losses if a trip is cancelled.
- P. Field trip destinations outside of the county or out of the state require a minimum of two HCPSS employees, at least one of whom will hold a valid Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) teaching certificate or a Department of Defense (DoD) Certified JROTC Instructor.
- Q. Transportation
1. At least one chaperone must be assigned per vehicle to be responsible for roll call, announcements, and supervision.
 2. This chaperone must be an HCPSS employee except for extenuating circumstances which must be approved by the Superintendent/designee.
 3. Each vehicle will maintain required minimums for chaperone to student ratios, as in Section I.L. above.
 4. The number of students and chaperones will not exceed the capacity of each vehicle transporting students.
 5. All medication, medical supplies, and the person(s) responsible for administering the medication will be transported in the same vehicle as the student(s) requiring the medical services.
 6. When transportation is provided by HCPSS, parents may receive prior permission from a school-based administrator to transport their own child to and/or from a field trip. Parents must request such permission in advance and in writing and acknowledge the release of the child to their custody, ownership of care, and full liability. Parents may only transport their own child. Additionally, students may not transport themselves to or from a field trip when transportation is provided by HCPSS.
 7. When transportation is not provided by HCPSS, parents are responsible for arranging transportation for their own child to and/or from a field trip.
 8. A student who displays disciplinary concerns while on a field trip and needs to be removed from the field trip will not be transported by an HCPSS employee. Parents will be required to transport their student from the site; or transportation will be arranged on a bonded, insured, commercial vehicle, with parents responsible for the financial cost of the transportation. HCPSS school-based employees will supervise the student in transit when transportation is arranged by HCPSS.

II. Specific Responsibilities:

A. Teacher-In-Charge

1. Execute all protocols in the Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet.
2. Meet all approval timelines.
3. As necessary, contact the site desired and request contracts, quotes, invoices, and relevant details to support the completion of the Field Trip Request Form.
4. Be familiar with the site and with direct and alternate routes.
5. Secure approved means of transportation, per Section II.D.3. below.
6. Plan and write a detailed itinerary.
7. Advise school-based administrator(s) regarding costs and other appropriate information and update the information as necessary.
8. Submit the online Field Trip Travel Request Form for school-based administrator approval a minimum of thirty (30) school days prior to the departure date.
9. Prepare permission forms for the field trip.
10. Be aware that chaperones assigned to meet required ratios are considered essential for the trip and therefore, any costs associated with their participation will be included in the cost of the field trip and divided equally among participating students. Chaperones, should they choose, can exercise the option to pay for their own cost of field trip attendance.
11. In collaboration with administration, communicate to families:
 - a. Available payment options, including how to seek financial assistance to cover all or part of costs for field trips.
 - b. How to make a donation to the school to assist students in need of financial assistance.
12. Notify the school-based health services employees of any planned field trip and names of students participating at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the field trip.
13. Ensure an adequate number of chaperones for the size of the group who have been screened and have read, signed, and returned the Chaperone Responsibility Form.

14. Notify the cafeteria manager upon approval of field trip.

15. Attend the field trip.

B. School-Based Administrator

1. Ensure that efforts have been made to permit maximum participation by students regardless of economic circumstances.
2. Ensure that students with disabilities will be provided appropriate accommodations as indicated on their Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 plan by HCPSS school-based employees during the field trip.
3. Ensure that all required forms in the Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet are completed and submitted.
4. Schedule field trips to minimize conflicts with other school activities.
5. Ensure that classes are covered for teachers on approved field trips.
6. Grant access to the school building if the custodian will not be present at the time of departure or the return from an approved field trip.
7. Maintain a file of approved Field Trip Travel Request Forms and Permission Forms for Student Field Trip for two (2) years from the date of the trip.
8. Ensure that the Teacher-In-Charge:
 - a. Knows the procedures to be followed regarding HCPSS search and seizure expectations.
 - b. Has been trained to conduct a search commensurate with the training received by a principal.
 - c. Has been designated, in writing, by the principal, to conduct a search on a field trip when events warrant.
9. Ensure that the Teacher-In-Charge knows the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency, illness, or accident.
10. Ensure that instructional coverage is provided for any student not participating in the field trip.
11. The principal/designee will give his/her cell phone number to the Teacher-In-Charge so that the Teacher-In-Charge can contact the administrator to report any emergencies or change of plans that occur. The administrator must have a plan to communicate this information to parents through multiple, acceptable channels of communication.

C. HCPSS Health Services Employees

1. Except for students identified by the school health services team to have care needs that can't be delegated, no health services employees will be provided on field trips.
2. Nurses will delegate nursing tasks to health assistants and other unlicensed HCPSS employees in accordance with the Maryland Board of Nursing, Nurse Practice Act.
3. The delegating nurse will collaborate with HCPSS instructional employees to provide safe participation for students during field trips.
4. The delegating nurse will allow students to self-carry and self-administer their own medication if the medical order so directs and is appropriate.
5. A delegating nurse will make the arrangements for necessary and reasonable one-to-one nursing care.
6. Medication administration will follow the health services medication administration procedures found in HCPSS Health Services Requirements and Procedures.
7. For extended day, overnight, and non-school day field trips, parents must provide to the nurse or health assistant, a minimum of two (2) school days prior to departure, all appropriately labeled medications requiring administration and the physician's order form.

D. Administrative Office Personnel

1. The Office of Safety and Security will review all submitted forms. The Office of Safety and Security and the Purchasing Office will review all contracts for approval in a timely manner.
2. School Management and Instructional Leadership will review all submitted forms for approval in a timely manner.
3. The Office of Transportation will provide a comprehensive list of approved carriers for field trips.
4. School Management and Instructional Leadership, in collaboration with the Office of Safety and Security, will review and update the Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet annually.

III. Definitions

Within the context of these implementation procedures, the following definitions apply:

- A. Delegating Nurse – A registered nurse who provides training to a non-licensed person to perform selected nursing tasks and/or administer medication to students on a field trip.
- B. Student Day – School day from the opening bell signaling the start of the student schedule until the bell signaling dismissal.

IV. Monitoring

Policy 8100 implementation procedures will be overseen by the Division of Operations.

V. History¹

ADOPTED: April 14, 1988
REVIEWED: December 13, 2018
MODIFIED: July 12, 2018
 August 23, 2018
 August 18, 2020
 December 7, 2021
 October 12, 2023
REVISED: February 22, 1990
 June 20, 2006
 March 13, 2014
 June 25, 2020
EFFECTIVE: October 12, 2023

¹ Key: **Adopted**-Original date the Board took action to approve a policy; **Reviewed**-The date the status of a policy was assessed by the Superintendent's Standing Policy Group; **Modified**-The date the Board took action to alter a policy that based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee did not require a comprehensive examination; **Revised**-The date the Board took action on a that policy based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee needed a comprehensive examination; **Effective**-The date a policy is implemented throughout the HCPSS, typically July 1 following Board action.