

I. Policy Statement

The Board of Education of Howard County recognizes that student field trips, aligned with the Howard County Public School System's (HCPSS) vision and mission, will engage and inspire students with meaningful and enriching experiences.

In order to offer maximum benefit to students, the Board expects that field trips will have a direct relationship to the HCPSS curricular programs or students' social-emotional, cultural, or leadership development. The Board recognizes that careful consideration must be given to the protection of instructional time and the appropriate use of instructional personnel.

The Board is committed to the school system providing all students equitable opportunities to participate in field trips. Field trips must be aligned with HCPSS policies and procedures for supervision and safety.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to plan, approve, and conduct student field trips off and on school grounds and within the United States.

III. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Administrative Approval Process – The process of review and approval by the school-based administrator and the Superintendent/designees.
- B. Chaperone – A parent of a participating student, an adult age 21 or older, or an employee, any of whom has been processed through the visitor management system and approved by the principal to accompany and supervise students during the entirety of the field trip.
- C. Employee – Any individual employed by the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).
- D. Field Trip – A school or HCPSS-sponsored program that enhances students' educational experiences. These experiences may occur as an in-school field trip, in-county field trip, out-of-county field trip, extended day field trip, or an overnight field trip and should align with at least one of the field trip categories below:

1. Curriculum Field Trip – Extends and enriches the curricular program.
 2. Culturally-Related Field Trip – Engages students in cultural awareness or experiences to learn more about their cultural identity or that of others.
 3. Community Building Field Trip – Reinforces relationships in an existing group of students, prepares students for a significant transition into a new structure or community, or helps students learn to work collaboratively.
 4. Service Learning Field Trip – Engages students in opportunities to learn the value of helping others in their own community and beyond.
 5. Personal Growth and Leadership Development Field Trip – Exposes students to new group or individual activities whereby they learn new skills and new ideas, develop identity, build self-esteem, grow strengths, and build camaraderie while developing decision-making and leadership skills.
- E. Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet – Documents and information required for the administrative approval and execution of field trips.
- F. HCPSS-Sponsored Program – An activity, event, or meeting developed or organized by HCPSS with the knowledge and approval of the associated school principal and/or Superintendent/designee, that is under the direction and control of an authorized HCPSS employee, where HCPSS assumes responsibility and liability for the program, event or action.
- G. Parent – Any one of the following recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
1. Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
 2. Adoptive Parent – A person who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.
 3. Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
 4. Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
 5. Caregiver – An adult resident of Howard County who exercises care, custody, or control over the student but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian as long as the person satisfies the requirements of the Education Article, §7-101 (c) (Informal Kinship Care) or has been issued a U.S. Department of Health and Human

Service's Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Verification of Release form entering into a custodial arrangement with the federal government.

6. Foster Parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in the home by a state agency or a licensed child placement as provided by the Family Law Article, §5-507.
- H. Permission Form for Student Field Trip – Document distributed to a parent for the purpose of providing detailed information about a field trip and to acquire, from the parent, consent for his/her child to participate.
- I. Student – A person who is enrolled in the HCPSS.
- J. Teacher-In-Charge – An HCPSS employee holding a valid Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) teaching certificate, who plans a field trip, submits an application for approval of a field trip, attends/supervises the field trip, and assumes responsibility for ensuring compliance with the provisions of this policy.
- K. Visitor Management System – A system which verifies the eligibility of visitors to enter school property.

IV. Standards

- A. All field trips require a Teacher-In-Charge.
- B. The provisions of this policy apply to all field trips organized and coordinated by HCPSS Teachers-In-Charge.
- C. Field trips will align with HCPSS curricular programs and/or the school systems vision and mission.
- D. Field Trips will align with at least one of the field trip categories in Section III.C. above.
- E. Field trips will be conducted in accordance with rules, regulations, and policies related to the health, safety, and well-being of students, employees, and chaperones such as those listed in Section IV. of this policy.
- F. No field trip will be conducted without receiving full approval through the administrative approval process.
- G. All students regardless of their individual status or perceived status in a protected class (race, color, creed, national origin, immigration status, religion, physical, mental, or learning ability, pregnancy, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status) must be provided an opportunity to participate in field trips when they take place.

- H. Transportation for field trips will be provided by an authorized public carrier in accordance with HCPSS transportation procedures.
- I. Health services employees will ensure that all field trips comply with current school health services requirements from the Maryland Board of Nursing, the Maryland State Department of Education School Health Services, and the HCPSS Health Services Requirements and Procedures.
- J. Chaperones will be processed through the visitor management system, complete the Child Abuse and Neglect Training, and are required to read, sign, and return the Chaperone Responsibility Form acknowledging their responsibilities and understanding of HCPSS field trip policy and procedures, prior to participating in a field trip.
- K. Parents, chaperones, and students will receive, at minimum, information including:
 - 1. Expectations for conduct consistent with federal, state, and local laws and all HCPSS policies.
 - 2. Safety, emergency, and security procedures.
 - 3. Logistics and specific itineraries.
 - 4. Health and medical provisions, as appropriate.
- L. No student will be denied participation in a field trip as a consequence for a previous infraction for which discipline has already been issued and completed. However, if a student is on active suspension or expulsion the student cannot attend the field trip.
- M. The HCPSS reserves the right to cancel a trip at any time to ensure the safety of students, HCPSS employees, and chaperones. If such a cancellation occurs, the school system is not responsible for any financial loss incurred by the parent of students participating on the trip.
- N. In advance of a field trip, all students participating in the field trip are required to have a parent signature on the Permission Form for Student Field Trip which serves as the parents' written consent for field trip participation.
- O. Chaperones may not bring other children on a field trip. Only students who are part of the designated class or group may participate in a field trip.
- P. The HCPSS does not sponsor student travel outside the United States.

V. Responsibilities

- A. The Superintendent/designee will develop and implement procedures to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of all participants on field trips.

- B. The Superintendent/designees will review and ensure that field trips comply with the provisions of this policy prior to approval.
- C. The Superintendent/designee will review and update the Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet annually.
- D. The Director of Transportation will update and implement procedures for safe student travel.
- E. The Health Services Coordinator will update and implement health procedures to meet the needs of students participating in field trips.
- F. School-based administrators will ensure that each field trip has been approved through the administrative process and complies with the provisions of this policy.

VI. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures for the implementation of this policy.

VII. References

- A. Legal
 - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 7-308 (Searches in Schools)
 - COMAR 10.27.09.01 Standards of Practice for Registered Nurse
 - COMAR 10.27.11.02.B6 Delegation of Nursing Functions, CMT
 - COMAR 10.27.39.10.53 Maryland Board of Nursing, Maryland Nurse Practice Act
- B. Other Board Policies
 - Policy 1080 Educational Equity
 - Policy 3010 Emergency Preparedness and Response
 - Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology, Digital Tools, and Social Media
 - Policy 9020 Students' Rights and Responsibilities
 - Policy 9200 Student Discipline
 - Policy 9230 Alcohol, Other Drugs, Prescription Medication, and Over-the-Counter Products
 - Policy 9260 Student Search and Seizure
- C. Relevant Data Sources
 - Risk Management Report
- D. Other
 - Chaperone Responsibility Form
 - Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet
 - Field Trip Travel Request Form
 - HCPSS Student Code of Conduct

HCPSS Health Services Requirements and Procedures
Maryland State Department of Education School Health Services
Permission Form for Student Field Trip

VIII. History

ADOPTED: April 14, 1988
REVIEWED:
MODIFIED: July 12, 2018
REVISED: February 22, 1990
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 March 13, 2014
 June 25, 2020
EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2020

I. 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.

II. General

- A. All HCPSS policies and school rules are applicable in effect during field trips.
- B. Students should report any concerns about violation of policy or 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 III.C. 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 thirty (30) school 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 sixty (60) school 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 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 III.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 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.
- 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 II.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. School employees will supervise the student in transit when transportation is arranged by HCPSS.

III. 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 III.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 school 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. 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 employees in accordance with the Maryland Board of Nursing, Nurse Practice Act.
3. The delegating nurse will collaborate with 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.

IV. History

ADOPTED: April 14, 1988

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