

I. Policy Statement

The Board of Education of Howard County recognizes that student field trips engage and inspire students by enriching classroom instruction when aligned with school system goals.

The Board expects that, in order to offer maximum benefit to students, field trips will have a direct relationship to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) curricular programs. The Board recognizes that careful consideration must be given to the protection of instructional time and the appropriate use of instructional personnel. The Board further believes that the school system has a responsibility to ensure that reasonable procedures for supervision and safety are in place and that the participants and their parents are fully informed regarding arrangements.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to plan, approve, and conduct student field trips off 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 approved by the principal to accompany and supervise students on a field trip.
- C. Field Trip – An educational experience that occurs off school grounds that either:
 - 1. Serves as an introductory device to stimulate or motivate interest.
 - 2. Provides a direct source of information and an opportunity to broaden understanding through firsthand experiences.
 - 3. Extends and enriches the curricular program.
 - 4. Serves as a culminating activity for the curricular program.

- D. Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet – Documents and information required for the administrative approval and execution of field trips.
- E. 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).
 - 6. Foster Parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a state agency or a licensed child placement as provided by the Family Law Article, §5-507.
- F. 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, and assumes responsibility for ensuring compliance with the provisions of this policy.

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 be a natural outgrowth of the HCPSS curricular programs and will align with school system goals and objectives.
- D. 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.
- E. Field trips require approval through the administrative approval process.

- F. Transportation for field trips will be provided by an authorized public carrier in accordance with HCPSS transportation procedures.
- G. Health services staff 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.
- H. Chaperones will be screened and required to read, sign, and return the Chaperone Responsibility Form prior to participating in a field trip.
- I. Parents, chaperones, and students will receive, at minimum, information including:
 - a. Expectations for conduct consistent with all HCPSS policies, local, state and federal laws.
 - b. Safety, emergency, and security procedures.
 - c. Logistics and specific itineraries.
 - d. Health and medical provisions, as appropriate.
- J. Students suspended or expelled at the start of a field trip will be excluded from the entire field trip.
- K. The HCPSS reserves the right to cancel a trip at any time to ensure the safety of students and staff members. 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.
- L. All students participating in field trips are required to have the written consent of their parents.
- M. Chaperones may not bring other children on a field trip. Students not part of the designated class or group are not permitted on a field trip.
- N. 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 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 3010 Emergency Preparedness and Response
 - Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology 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
 - Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet
 - HCPSS Student Code of Conduct
 - HCPSS Health Services Requirements and Procedures
 - Maryland State Department of Education School Health Services

VIII. History

ADOPTED: April 14, 1988

REVIEWED:

MODIFIED: July 12, 2018

REVISED: February 22, 1990
June 20, 2006
March 13, 2014

EFFECTIVE: July 12, 2018

I. Definitions

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

- A. Chaperone Responsibilities Form – Document that chaperones sign acknowledging their responsibilities and understanding of Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) field trip policy and procedures.
- B. Delegating Nurse – A registered nurse who gives permission to a non-licensed person to provide nursing tasks and/or administer medication to students on a field trip.
- C. Employee – Any individual employed by the HCPSS.
- D. Permission Form – 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.
- E. Student – A person who is enrolled in the HCPSS.
- F. Student Day – School, day from the opening bell signaling the start of the school schedule until the bell signals dismissal.

II. General

- A. All HCPSS policies and school rules are applicable during field trips.
- B. Planning and Approval
 - 1. The Field Trip Travel Request Form will be submitted to the school administrator for approval a minimum of fifteen (15) school days prior to the distribution of the Permission Form for Student Field Trip.
 - 2. Permission Form for Student Field Trip will be distributed to students only when the school administrator's approval of the field trip has been received by the Teacher-In-Charge from the school-based administrator, the Office of Safety and Security, and the Division of School Management and Instructional Leadership.

3. 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 thirty (30) school days prior to any contractual deadline.
- C. Teachers will plan and execute appropriate pre- and post-field trip activities to reinforce the educational objectives of the trip.
 - D. Safety, emergency, and security procedures will be developed and communicated for all field trips.
 - E. Student health needs will be coordinated with school-based health services staff.
 - F. Extended Day Field Trips
 1. Field trips will have curricular-relevant activities.
 2. 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.
 3. 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.
 - G. Overnight Field Trips
 1. Overnight field trips will have curricular-relevant activities.
 2. Overnight field trips are limited to middle school and high school students.
 3. Overnight field trips will involve no more than three (3) school days unless approved in advance by the Superintendent/Designee.
 4. When arrival at the destination occurs prior to noon, students will participate in curricular-relevant activities on the day of arrival.
 5. Students will be returned no later than 10 p.m. Exceptions will be considered for extenuating circumstances subject to the approval of the Superintendent/Designee.

- H. Specific Provisions for Overnight Field Trips
1. There will be at least one male HCPSS staff member to accompany the students when male students are participating in a field trip.
 2. There will be at least one female HCPSS staff member to accompany the students when female students are participating in a field trip.
 3. Chaperones are considered to be supervising students at all times during an overnight field trip.
 4. Nightly curfew will be established daily by the Teacher-In-Charge. Students are to be in their own room at the designated time.
 5. Hotel address and phone number must be included in the itinerary.
- I. The Teacher-In-Charge will be responsible for:
1. Planning a field trip.
 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. Arranging for supervision of students.
- J. 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.
- K. 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.
- L. 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 staff until all students have left for home.

- M. 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.
- N. 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.
 - 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 will decide exceptions on an individual basis.
 4. The HCPSS will not be responsible for any financial losses if a trip is cancelled.
- O. Field trip destinations outside of the county or out of the state require a minimum of two HCPSS staff members, at least one of whom will hold a valid Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) teaching certificate.
- P. Transportation
1. At least one chaperone must be assigned per vehicle to be responsible for roll call, announcements, and supervision. Each vehicle will maintain required minimums for chaperone to student ratios, as in II.K. above.
 2. This chaperone must be an HCPSS employee except for extenuating circumstances which must be approved by the Superintendent/Designee.
 3. 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.

4. The number of students and chaperones will not exceed the capacity of each vehicle transporting students.
5. 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.
6. When transportation is not provided by HCPSS, parents are responsible for arranging transportation for their own child to and/or from a field trip.
7. Parents who are not chaperones and have the school-based administrator's prior approval may accompany a group on a field trip in their own vehicles. Parents must request such permission in advance and in writing and acknowledge their own responsibility and full liability.
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 a staff member. 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 staff 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. Contact the site and request contracts, invoices, and relevant details.
4. Be familiar with the site and with direct and alternate routes.
5. Secure approved means of transportation, per Section III.D.3.
6. Plan and write an 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.
9. Prepare permission forms for the field trip.
10. Notify the school-based health services staff of any planned field trip at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the field trip.
11. Ensure an adequate number of chaperones for the size of the group who have been screened and have read, signed, and returned the Chaperone Responsibilities Form.
12. Notify the cafeteria manager upon approval of field trip.

B. School-Based Administrator

1. Ensure that all required forms in the Field Trip Procedures and Forms Packet are completed and submitted.
2. Schedule field trips to minimize conflicts with other school activities.
3. Ensure that classes are covered for teachers on approved field trips.
4. 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.
5. Maintain a file of approved Field Trip Travel Request Forms and Permission Slips Forms for Student Field Trip for two (2) years from the date of the trip.
6. Ensure that the Teacher-In-Charge:
 - a. Knows the procedures to be followed regarding HCPSS search and seizure procedures.
 - 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.
7. Ensure that the Teacher-In-Charge knows the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency, illness, or accident.
8. Ensure that instructional coverage is provided for any student not participating in the field trip.

9. 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 Personnel

1. No health services personnel 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 cluster 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

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