



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

STUDENT TRIPS

6153

Procedure No.

October 1, 2006

Date

- I. **PURPOSE:** To provide information to administrators and teachers for implementing the Board Policy of student trips.
- II. **POLICY:**
 - A. The Board of Education recognizes field trips as an integral part of the instructional program. The purpose of a field trip is to provide educational experiences, related to a student's study, which are beyond the immediate school environment. In addition, field experiences offer extended opportunities for students to practice self-control, self-discipline, consideration for other people, and learning to make positive personal adjustments in a variety of new group situations. The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to meet the individual needs of students and for this reason, out-of-class experiences should be considered for individuals as well as for groups of students (Board Policy 6153).
 - B. Field trips shall only occur when national and security conditions warrant such travel.
 - C. In addition, as the Board of Education recognizes that musical groups may, from time to time, be required to perform at a location other than the musical group's home school, all trips taken from the home school shall be deemed to be Student Trips, and in addition to required compliance with Administrative Procedure 6124.1, such trips of musical groups shall be governed by this Administrative Procedure 6153.
 - D. Exceptions: The above policy is not applicable to any of the following activities:
 1. Participation in a continuing program or continuing activity which requires the student to regularly be absent for a specified portion of certain school days for the minimum of one grading period, or longer, and for which written parental permission had been obtained prior to the commencement of such continuing program or continuing activity. (Example: work-study programs, independent study programs, concurrent study programs, vocational-technical training programs, peer and/or cross-age tutorial programs, TAG programs, Student Government participation.)
 2. Walk-a-thons, bike-a-thons or similar programs where the student's participation is affiliated with the public school and where the scheduled activity does not interfere with the regularly scheduled school day. The sole purpose of the activity must be the raising of



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- funds for a recognized charitable cause previously approved by the Principal.
3. Parades or marches scheduled as part of a school's annual homecoming activity.
 4. Any other off-campus exposure limited to no more than one (1) school day or extending beyond the end of a school day on a Friday, but concluded prior to the commencement of the school day the following Monday and previously approved by the Principal where no more than five (5) students are involved at any time in such activity and the students are under the constant and continuing supervision of a certificated professional person and the parents of such students had given express prior written parental permission for such participation irrespective the existence of supervision (It's Academic Team).
 5. Board of Education authorized trips, irrespective of length to the Schmidt Outdoor Education Center, Ferguson Farm, Camp Pecometh, Howard B. Owens Science Center, or the like, if prior written parental approval has been obtained.
 6. Off-campus Commencement Exercises, off-campus proms, participation in Board of Education sponsored orchestras, choirs, or chorus, as well as participation in Board of Education sponsored Music Festivals, which are scheduled in the State of Maryland.
 7. Any other activity involving students and/or certificated professional personnel where such activity:
 - a. Does not interfere with any regularly scheduled school day.
 - b. Had not been planned during the regularly scheduled school day.
 - c. If the outgrowth of an extracurricular group or organization was not planned during a meeting or said group in the school of such group or organization.
 - d. Was not advertised by means of handbills, posters, or announcements in the school.
 - e. Required no collection of funds in the school from the students anticipated to participate in same.
 - f. Is not in any manner identified by name with either the public school or component in which the students are in attendance or possess membership.

- III. **BACKGROUND:** There is a need to have uniform procedures for schools to follow in arranging student trips to insure their safety and welfare and to insure the education value of these experiences. These procedures apply to all class and student organization activities away from the school building.



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IV. **DEFINITIONS:**

A. Student Trips: There are two kinds of student trips:

1. Field Trip – Any activity or excursion away from the school building taken by groups of students as a class or part of a class or as a student organization, under sponsorship of the school and under the guidance and supervision of professional staff members and written parental approval has been obtained.
2. International Exchange Trip - A trip taken as part of a program of study which has, as one of its scheduled components, a regular annual or biennial exchange of students between a Prince George's County Public School and a similar educational institution in another country, and which exchange, as part of such program of study, shall have previously been approved by the appropriate Regional Assistant Superintendent and the Chief Executive Officer or the CEO's designee.

B. Sponsoring Teacher: That certificated professional member of the school Staff who is directly responsible for the planning of a trip.

1. The Head Coach or leader of any athletic team or group, the Director of any band, choir or other musical group shall, for purposes of these rules and procedures be deemed to be a "sponsoring teacher."
2. No field trip, as above defined, shall be scheduled to have more than one sponsoring teacher.
3. No International Exchange Trips, as above defined, shall be scheduled without there being such number of sponsoring teacher, or teachers, as the Coordinator of the program arranging such a trip and the Chief Academic Officer deems necessary.

C. Chaperone: That responsible adult, member of the professional staff or a citizen in the school community who agrees to participate with the sponsoring teacher in any student trip. All chaperones must stay on site until all students have been picked up.

V. **CHAPERONE / STUDENT RATIO:**

A. Field Trip:

1. The minimum ratio of chaperone to student cannot be less than one chaperone (sponsoring teacher included) for every six (6) kindergarten students, one chaperone for every fifteen (15) students



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for elementary schools (grades 1-6), one chaperone for every twenty (20) students for middle schools, and one chaperone for every twenty-five (25) students in high schools. Except in the case of field trips involving musical groups or individual classes having an enrollment in excess of thirty (30) students, for which specific provision is made in section 2 hereafter, at least one-half of the required number of chaperones must be employed by the Board of Education of Prince George's County as certificated professional personnel and excepting the case of elementary schools, male and female chaperone teachers must be of a ratio reasonably consistent with the ratio of student participants anticipated.

2. In the case of musical groups or individual classes having an enrollment in excess of thirty (30) students, the Principal may waive, in writing, the requirement that at least one-half of the required number of chaperones must be employed by the Board of Education of Prince George's County as certificated professional personnel as chaperones in attendance on any field trips, provided that the chaperone/student ratio as set forth in paragraph A hereabove will still be maintained.

- B. International Exchange Trip: There shall be such number of chaperones as the Coordinator of the program arranging for such trip and the appropriate Chief Executive Officer or the CEO's designee deem necessary, depending upon the specific type of exchange program involved, such as where students will live in the homes of various host families in the country where the international exchange is to occur, and the maturity level of the students participating, as long as there is at least one sponsoring teacher traveling with the entire group of students.

VI. STUDENT TRIP LIMITATIONS:

- A. Field Trip: Except in the case of elementary schools where field trips may be scheduled with such frequency as is approved by the Principal, no sponsoring teacher may sponsor more than one field trip per semester, unless the express purpose of such trip is to permit the performance of the assumption of civic services by the student group on whose behalf said trip was planned. The Principal must determine that the frequency of any trips not have a deleterious effect upon the otherwise scheduled educational process of either the student participants or those non-participating students whose regularly assigned teachers are scheduled to be in attendance on said trip.



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1. Principals considering a student trip to an area that has experienced some form of civil disturbance must obtain the permission of the Chief Executive Officer or the CEO's designee.
 2. Local trips will be cancelled during a state of emergency, or when the current threat level is high or severe as determined by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security. If it is determined that local student trips will be cancelled, this will be posted on the website.
- B. International Exchange Trip: No International Exchange Trip may be scheduled for a period greater than four (4) weeks, of which no more than fifteen (15) days during which the Public Schools of Prince George's County are regularly scheduled.
- C. No student trip may be planned for or permitted to proceed to an area where either the sponsoring teacher or the Principal has knowledge of or reason to believe that the environment of the locale to which such student trip is to proceed is or had, within a ninety (90) day period preceding the contemplated date of said student trip, experienced civil strife or similar type of disturbance that may create hazards to the participants. Principals considering a student trip to an area that has experienced some form of civil strife or similar type of disturbance must obtain the permission of the Chief Executive Officer or the CEO's designee, and in the case of an International Exchange Trip, the Coordinator of the program arranging for same.
- D. Participation in any student trip may not be mandated by a sponsoring teacher and no student shall be penalized for his/her failure to participate in said student trips or at scheduled performances as a condition precedent to team performances, group membership, or enrollment in the program and the student's absence is not excused according to the Board of Education Policy on excused absences.
1. The sponsoring teacher shall have the primary responsibility of arranging suitable programs for such students who do not participate in the student trip but whose class or classes would be canceled by virtue of the sponsoring teacher and/or chaperone being in attendance on said student trip.
 2. Any student not participating on a student trip is still expected to attend school during such time as the student trip is in progress unless said student has an excused absence in accordance with Board of Education Policy.



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- E. Except for participation in an athletic event previously scheduled or approved by the Supervisor of Interscholastic Athletics, no trip may be taken as an extension of any regular or extracurricular activity where said activity requires participation by the student in a sport or experience known or reasonably known to the Principal to create the potential for injuries to persons not especially trained therefore nor skilled therein.
- F. No student trip may be scheduled without the sponsoring teacher and the Principal, in the case of a Field Trip, or the Coordinator of the program arranging such a trip and the Chief Executive Officer or the CEO's designee, in the case of an International Exchange Trip, first satisfying themselves that the participating students will not engage in any activities which are illegal at the destination of their travels, or along the route of same.
- G. The cost of the trip per student may not exceed the sum of money which the sponsoring teacher, in review with the Principal, in the case of a Field Trip, or the Coordinator of the program arranging such a trip and the Chief Executive Officer or the CEO's designee, in case of an International Exchange Trip, shall reasonably anticipate to be an amount of money that can be paid by all the students anticipated to participate in said trip or, alternatively, that provisions are made in the pricing of said trip for the inclusion at lesser or no cost of such students, who, though eligible for participation are, nevertheless, prevented in such participation for reasons of inability to pay.

VII. **PROCEDURES:**

- A. No sponsoring teacher may plan any trip without first having obtained written approval from his/her principal, in the case of a Field Trip, and written approval from the Chief Executive Officer or the CEO's designee, in the case of an International Exchange Trip.
- B. Field Trip: The sponsoring teacher shall furnish the Principal, no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the date of departure of any trip, with the names of the chaperones scheduled to participate in said trip.
 - 1. The sponsoring teacher shall furnish the Principal with a list of scheduled student participants no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the date of departure upon the presentation of which list the trip shall be deemed to be "closed" to any other students for whom a "standby" list may, however, be established, from which standby list participants may be chosen in the place and stead of other



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- students giving notification of cancellation within said seven (7) calendar day period.
2. Under no circumstances may a sponsoring teacher accept a deposit of funds from more participants in a trip than said sponsoring teacher has space allocations on the carrier chosen to transport the participants on the trip.
 3. All space allocations must be confirmed, in writing, to the sponsoring teacher at least five (5) calendar days prior to the scheduled departure date of said trip.
 4. The price of any trip shall be restricted to the actual costs of said field trip. Any student having previously paid for the costs of his or her participation on said field trip and unable to proceed on same, irrespective of cause, shall not be entitled to a refund of monies previously paid unless a student “standby” is prepared to go in his or her place and stead, unless the sponsoring teacher determines that the issuance of a refund will not cause an increased expense to the remaining student participants. No student standby may be permitted to proceed on a field trip unless such student pays the per-pupil allocated cost of said trip.
 5. No trip shall be permitted to proceed under any circumstances if the ratio of chaperones to students at the time of the commencement of said trip deviates by more than ten (10%) percent of the minimum ratio set forth hereabove in Section V.
 6. No trip may be planned for a destination beyond the boundaries of Prince George’s County and the Metropolitan Area of the District of Columbia without the sponsoring teacher first having obtained the prior permission of the appropriate Regional Assistant Superintendent.
 7. No trip may be taken to include an overnight period unless, in addition to the above:
 - a. The trip’s principle function can be proven to be a supplement or an extension of a specific course of study taught by the sponsoring teacher, and in which the potential student participants are enrolled.
 - b. The trip is undertaken for purposes of permitting the participation by students in a tournament, exhibition, or any other type of setting where the performance by such group of students is the principle purpose of the trip.
 - c. The trip is undertaken to an installation which such installation has, as part of its regular program, made provisions for the inspection of its facilities by public school students and their participation in specific educational



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- programs provided by such institution as part of its regularly scheduled practices.
- d. The place of overnight lodging, if not the dormitory facilities of another educational institution or the homes of parents of students of other jurisdictions as in the case of a student exchange trip, but a commercial enterprise charging a fee for such overnight lodging, must have a minimum rating of one “diamond” or better on the listing annually published by the American Automobile Association; hotels or motels being part of a nationally advertised franchise excluded from this provision of same are not rated by said American Automobile Association.
 - e. Both the sponsoring teacher and the Principal shall have in their possession a roster of all field trip participants. The roster must include the home telephone numbers of parents.
 - f. The sponsoring teacher shall have in his/her possession the Emergency Medical Treatment Authorization Form.
 - g. The sponsoring teacher shall have in his/her possession the home telephone numbers of all of the local school administrators.
 - h. No field trip may be taken for two or more successive overnight periods unless, in addition to the above, the trip does not cause the student to miss more than two regularly scheduled school days.
- C. International Exchange Trip: The sponsoring teacher, together with the Coordinator of the program arranging such a trip, shall furnish the Principal, no later than four (4) months preceding the date of departure of any trip, with a written proposal specifically detailing all of the following:
1. The dates during which the trip is to take place.
 2. The purpose of the trip and the educational goals to be attained therefore.
 3. The itinerary to be followed both to and from the ultimate destination of said trip.
 4. The identity of the organization(s) arranging for all travel and housing.
 5. The identity of a specific contact individual at the ultimate destination.
 6. The approximate number of students to participate on said trip.
 7. The approximate cost due and payable by each student therefore.
 8. The means of funding for said trip, if not expected to be borne by the individual students.



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9. The number and identity of any school staff accompanying the sponsoring teacher.
10. The anticipated number of chaperones to accompany the students.

VIII. **TRANSPORTATION:**

- A. Arrangements for transportation for any student trip within the Metropolitan Area of the District of Columbia must be made by the local school. If the student trip participants are scheduled to go by bus, no commercial carrier may be contracted with unless the Director of Transportation of Prince George's County Public Schools has clearly stated that no Prince George's County public school buses are available for such a trip.
- B. If the total number of persons anticipated to go on a student trip is in excess of twenty-five (25), the sponsoring teacher, chaperones and student participants included, the transportation of all participants must be on a public school bus or commercial carrier which, if a bus, must be a carrier whose name is on the approved list of transportation carriers as such list is maintained by the Director of Transportation, or in the specific case of an International Exchange Trip, by the Chief Executive Officer or the CEO's designee.
- C. If arrangements for a student trip beyond the Metropolitan Area of the District of Columbia are made through the utilization of a travel agency, adherence must be given to the following procedures:
 1. Brochures advertising the school-sponsored activity are to be sent to the home of the public school student concerned who is being solicited to participate.
 2. Such brochures shall clearly state on the face thereof: Travel arrangements for this trip are being handled by (Name of travel agency concerned).
 3. If the student cost is more than twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars, checks by parents should be made directly to the order of the travel agency handling such travel arrangements, and not to the order of the school.

IX. **FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:**

- A. If any student trip is to be funded by Board of Education funds, in whole or in part, specifically including a portion of the costs of transportation but not necessarily limited to same, the extent or scope of such student trip shall be



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properly identified in the Annual Budget of the Board of Education of Prince George's County.

1. The Principal shall be notified as early in the fiscal year as reasonable of the amount of budgeted funds available for such purposes.
 2. The original notification to students and parents of the field trip is to include notice of the fact that said student trip is funded, in whole or in part, through budgeted funds of the Board of Education of Prince George's County.
- B. If any student trip is to be funded by local school originating funds, in whole or in part, information to that effect must be included in the original notice to students and parents advising same of this fact.
- C. There shall be no solicitation by individual students, chaperones or community supporters of the student trip of funds for the purpose of subsidizing the cost of any student trip, irrespective of the fact that such solicitation is conducted in the name of the school, a school affiliated organization or the community itself, unless there is adherence to the following procedures:
1. The sponsoring teacher shall, simultaneous to the time that approval for said student trip is being sought from the Principal and/or the appropriate Regional Assistant Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer or Chief Executive Officer, as hereabove required, advise said principal of the fact that solicitation of funds may be needed for the purpose of subsidizing the student trip.
 - a. A justification for fund solicitation, which justification shall be based solely upon the student group or organization contemplating said Field Trip having first been formally invited, in writing, by an international, national or regional sponsor or tournament committee to participate in a recognized competition, tournament or performance, and the sole purpose of which competition, tournament or performance by similar groups is the convening of said international, national or regional competition, tournament or performance, or in the case of an International Exchange Trip that such has been recommended by the Coordinator of the program seeking to schedule same.



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- b. Such advice shall consist of the anticipated goal of funds to be collected and the manner in which the solicitations are to take place.
 - c. The Principal, upon reviewing the justification aforesaid and approving the recommendation of the sponsoring teacher, shall obtain the prior written approval from the appropriate Regional Assistant Superintendent, which written approval from the Chief Academic Officer must be issued prior to the commencement of any solicitation.
 - d. The appropriate Regional Assistant Superintendent may further authorize fund-raising by a performing group for purposes of permitting said group to perform at a parade, half-time activity of a university or Bowl or at any other place of exhibition if in his opinion the group's performance would be representative of the quality of educational opportunities made available by the Public School System of Prince George's County and, accordingly, determine that such performance would enhance a system-wide benefit. No more than one off-campus fund-raising campaign, not to exceed thirty (30) days in length, may be scheduled in any one school year for the above purpose.
 - e. Under no circumstances may the manner of solicitation be through the means of raffles, lotteries or other similar type of games or opportunities of chance where prizes may be awarded as a result of the donation.
- X. **INSURANCE:** No overnight student trip may be scheduled beyond the Metropolitan Area of the District of Columbia unless a group accident/travel insurance policy is obtained by the sponsoring teacher or the travel agency arranging for said student trip, which said insurance coverage is to include all trip participants, cover the anticipated student trip period and be part of the prior stated per-pupil cost of the student trip.
- XI. **TRIPS OUTSIDE THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES:**
- A. Any person contemplating a student trip outside the continental United States must first obtain all necessary approvals as set forth hereafter before causing the distribution of any flyers or other similar advertisements announcing same or collecting any funds therefore.
 - B. No contract with any tour operator, airline, railroad, or other transportation carrier, hotel, motel, or other place of lodging may be signed until all necessary approvals as set forth hereafter have been obtained.



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- C. Nothing in paragraphs A and B hereabove is to be construed as preventing the prospective sponsor of such student trip from:
1. Having no more than one meeting with students to ascertain student interest.
 2. Making inquiries among appropriate tour operators, transporters, and hotel/motel companies to ascertain approximate costs.
- D. No student trip to an area beyond the continental limits of the United States may be planned until approvals from all of the following have been obtained:
1. Principal
 2. Regional Assistant Superintendent
 3. Chief Academic Officer
 4. Chief Executive Officer
 - a. The Chief Executive Officer's approval shall be in writing.
 - b. The Chief Executive Officer may impose such additional guidelines and/or constraints on travel arrangements as he/she, in his/her judgment, may deem to be appropriate for the stated purpose of the trip.
- E. No student trip outside the continental limits of the United States may be planned to commence for a period less than sixty (60) days in the case of a Field Trip or six (6) months in the case of an International Exchange Trip accruing from the date that permission is sought from the Chief Academic Officer and the contemplated date of departure.
- F. All student trips contemplated for travel beyond the continental limits of the United States are subject to cancellation by the Chief Executive Officer at any time prior to the scheduled departure of said student trip if, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, the destination of travel at the time of said student trip is to an area known to the Chief Executive Officer to be experiencing or in danger of civil strife and the like. All original notifications to students and/or parents of said trip shall specifically include, in **BOLD PRINT OR TYPE**, this provision Paragraph XI, Subsection F, which said notification is to further advise the students and/or parents that in the event such cancellation for reasons as aforesaid, the Board of Education of Prince George's County shall assume no responsibility or liability for the failure of any travel agency or other source having assumed the responsibility of making travel arrangements, failing to



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issue refunds, in whole or in part, to the students originally anticipated to participate in said student trip.

XII. **PERMISSION SLIPS:**

- A. No student may participate on a student trip unless a Permission Slip, duly approved in writing by the parent, has been received by the sponsoring teacher and delivered to the Principal prior to the scheduled date of departure of said trip for safekeeping in the school.

All Permission Slips shall be retained in the school for a minimum period of six (6) months accruing from the date of said trip unless a trip participant incurred an injury or a claim for damages arising from an alleged act of negligence, resulting from any of the operations of said trip, was filed by a participant or his or her adult parent, and the existence of such injury or claim is known to the Principal, in which event, such Permission Slip shall be retained until formally ordered discarded by the Chief Executive Officer.

- B. No student may participate in a student trip unless, in addition to the Permission Slip as above, the Emergency Medical Treatment Authorization Form, duly signed by the parent, has been received by the sponsoring teacher.
- C. All Permission Slips relating to student trip travel shall be in the form applicable to said student trip, as herewith attached.
1. Form "X" – day trip
 2. Form "Y" – overnight trip
 3. Form "Z" – trip beyond the continental limits of the United States
- D. All Emergency Medical Treatment Authorization Forms relating to student trip travel shall be in the format as herewith attached.

XIII. **RELATED PROCEDURES:** Board of Education Policy 6124.1, General, Vocal and Instructional Musical Ensemble Performances, and Board Policy 5135, School-Based Fund Raising, and Administrative Procedure 6124.1, General, Vocal and Instructional Musical Group Performances.

XIV. **MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THESE PROCEDURES:** This Administrative Procedures originates with the Chief Academic Officer. It will be updated, as needed.



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- XV. **CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDURES:** This Administrative Procedure cancels and supersedes Administrative Procedure 6153, dated November 11, 1992.
- XVI. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 1, 2006.

Approved by:
John E. Deasy
Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. Permission Slip Form "X"
2. Permission Slip Form "Y"
3. Permission Slip Form "Z"
4. Emergency Medical Authorization Form

Distribution: Lists 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, and 11