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GUIDELINES FOR FIELD TRIPS AND OTHER SCHOOL SPONSORED TRAVEL

1. For purposes of this policy, any off-campus activity that is sponsored and/or controlled by Rochester School Department personnel will be subject to these guidelines. Field trips are considered enrichment to the curriculum and must correlate with the instruction in the classroom.
2. Parents may make suggestions for field trips. However, the decision to take a field trip is up to the teacher or team of teachers, with final approval from the Superintendent.
3. Field trips must relate directly to the school district mission and goals. Before taking a field trip, a pre-visit should be made when possible. Eating facilities and rest rooms should be considered and chaperones should be prepared for each trip so that they will take their responsibilities seriously.
4. A Field Trip Request Form must be filled out for each field trip. This form must be submitted to the principal, and is subject to the principal's approval. A principal shall approve a field trip request only if the principal finds that the proposed field trip enriches the curriculum and correlates with instruction in the classroom. If approved by the principal, the request shall be submitted to the Superintendent for final approval. The Superintendent shall, each month, notify the Board of all trips approved by the Superintendent in the prior month.
5. All field trip income and expenses shall flow through the Student Activity account for the school involved, provided that upon approval of the Superintendent other arrangements may be made, providing for equivalent control and reporting of the disposition of such funds.
6. Trips that are sponsored and/or operated primarily by commercial tour companies, even if managed or chaperoned by Rochester School Department personnel, shall not be considered school-sponsored field trips.
 - a. Trips shall fall under this proviso if they meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - 1) Students are asked to pay a fee for travel, housing or other trip related expenses directly to a commercial vendor, individual or organization other than the Rochester School Department.
 - 2) The trip spans all or part of a school district vacation, even if the trip begins before or ends after the school district vacation, unless the trip is taken by a school-sponsored organization to a school related event that, by circumstance, falls in the vacation period (e.g., a vocational club state convention, school athletic team competition, or school band performance).
 - 3) Rochester School Department staff members associated with the trip are receiving payment or other consideration, such as free travel or lodging, from the tour company or other vendor that is beyond compensation paid by the Rochester School Department.
 - 4) The trip is offered primarily as a pleasure trip or enrichment beyond the scope of the Rochester School Department curriculum and mission, regardless of whether the vendor or sponsor may be able to document educational benefit.

- b. Notwithstanding language to the contrary, the Rochester School Board retains the right to waive the conditions of the above proviso, and approve or disapprove any trip proposed as a field trip that it deems to fall within the mission of the Rochester School Department.
 - c. Recruitment of student participants in any non-school sponsored trips under this section shall be subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) Use of school facilities or lines of communication to recruit student participants shall require prior approval of the Rochester School Board. This shall include use of school bulletin boards, newsletters, electronic dissemination, printed flyers distributed at school, verbal or written announcements by school staff, or any other means of communication that can connect the Rochester School Department with the trip or announcement of the trip.
 - 2) If any such trip involves the use of school personnel to organize, manage, recruit, or otherwise be involved in the trip in a highly visible way, any announcements, literature, or other communications regarding the trip shall include, in a prominent manner, a statement that the trip “is not associated with, sponsored by, or endorsed by the Rochester School Department.”
 - 3) This provision shall not prohibit school district staff members from affiliating with any tour operator or other commercial vendor as a volunteer, paid employee, or otherwise so long as said affiliation is not detrimental to the school employee’s performance of duties for the Rochester School Department and does not result in payment by the Rochester School Department and the tour operator or other commercial vendor twice for the same services.
 - d. The Rochester School Department, its officials, agents and employees, will not accept responsibility for any accidents, injuries or other aspects of trips that are not school sponsored field trips.
- 7. Permission must be received in writing from the parent or guardian of each child before the scheduled trip or the child will not be allowed to go. Parents should be notified if the trip goes beyond the school day and requested to provide transportation home for their child. For students in grades 6-12, permission must also be obtained from each classroom teacher for each student before the scheduled trip. Permission shall be granted by such teachers unless a teacher finds that the student is currently failing or in danger of failing the class, or that suitable arrangements for making up missed class time cannot be made.
 - 8. All field trips, except those within walking distance, are to be by bus and supervised by teachers and adults unless prior approval of alternate means of transportation is obtained from Superintendent.
 - 9. For Grades K-8, chaperones must be on a one to six ratio, and one to ten ratio for grades 9-12.
 - 10. No more than two field trips per grade, per year, will be allowed except at the discretion of the Building Principal, with the final approval by the Superintendent of Schools. High School field trips will be at the discretion of the Building Principal.
 - 11. If there are any questions pertaining to field trips, please check with the building Principal.
 - 12. Field trips impose additional burdens on teachers to cope with the responsibilities attendant to being outside the classroom environment. Pupils who are disruptive must be accompanied by one or both parents. This policy reflects the Board’s concern to have immediate parental consent should an emergency arise.

13. Field trips regularly used as part of a special education curriculum for purposes of motivation or instruction, shall:
 - a. require an approved schedule of activities endorsed by the Principal, Special Education Coordinator, and Superintendent;
 - b. require a schedule of activities and permission signed by the parents of all participating students;
14. Use school buses whenever practical. Staff members' cars and/or other vehicles may be used only when the private cars are lawfully registered, inspected, and properly insured. They may be driven by a school employee with a valid driver's license and who is at least twenty-one years of age. Properly insured will mean the level of insurance ordered by the Superintendent and copy of Certificate of Insurance must be submitted to the Superintendent. A supplemental conditional policy may be purchased by the School Department in order to meet the Superintendent's standard. All students in private vehicles are required to use seatbelts.

Adoption Date: April 8, 1993

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