
TRAVEL STUDY

Travel-study programs of a national and international nature are extensions of school programs. Travel-study programs should supplement and enrich classroom learning and promote better national and international understanding.

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility for the safety of all students and chaperones. Once approved, the board reserves the right to cancel a trip at any time, particularly if security and safety is in doubt. In the event a school-sponsored curricular field trip is canceled, the district will not be responsible for reimbursing any deposits or expenses incurred by students, parents or staff. Parents and students should be made aware of the preceding information at the time permission is given to attend the trip. The following regulations have been established to provide for appropriate planning, chaperone responsibilities, and student rules of behavior to ensure safety.

The following guidelines are established and shall be adhered to unless exceptions are granted beforehand by the Superintendent of Schools acting as the agent for the Board of Education.

1. There will be no public disclosure or release of information until the following conditions have been met:
 - a. All international travel-study programs will be presented to the Superintendent for review at least 10 months prior to departure;
 - b. The Superintendent will review a specific trip with a Lead Chaperone at least nine months prior to departure;
 - c. After preliminary review and approval is made by the Superintendent, he/she will inform the Board of the tentative travel-study plans;
 - d. The Board will approve or disapprove the proposal; and
 - e. If approved by the Board, plans may be submitted.

2. Those proposing the trip will submit the following to the Superintendent for approval:
 - a. A written statement of objectives;
 - b. An itinerary, and proposed dates;
 - c. The estimated price, including cost of insurance;
 - d. A survey of student interest;
 - e. A survey of possible chaperones who will be employees of the Board;
 - f. An overnight supervision plan;
 - g. A schedule of report to the Board after the trip;
 - h. A statement signed indicating benefits, etc., received by proposer(s); and
 - i. A copy of any contract or agreement to be signed.

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3. Final selection of a travel agent will be made by those proposing the trip after appropriate business precautions have been taken. The Lead Chaperone will secure at least two quotations from reputable travel agents.
4. The travel agent who is ultimately selected to arrange the trip must give a written assurance that there will be a liaison agent abroad who will be available at convenient times to assist the district should the need arise. The agent must give further written assurance that there will be appropriate substitute programs available during the trip should any planned activity not be possible to conduct. The travel agent or agency selected must be a bona fide business, registered with the State Department of Taxation, a member of two legitimate travel agent associations, and must be able to present at least two references for similar types of school trips they have arranged.
5. The Travel agent should make every effort to house students on one floor or a single wing of a hotel to improve supervision and to provide for the safety and security of the students.
6. After the Superintendent secures Board approval, the Lead Chaperone will then oversee the detailed planning to include the following:
 - a. Announce the trip: Announcements must be made in such fashion that the information is received by students at essentially the same time and that all eligible students are given an equal opportunity to apply;
 - b. Finalize chaperone list and submit such to the Superintendent for approval;
 - c. Proceed with student sign-up and the securing of appropriate deposits; and
 - d. Complete student screening.
7. Educational activities must include:
 - a. Prior instruction and orientation meetings for all participants before leaving Catskill;
 - b. Educational lectures and meetings during the trip which are directly related to the trip objectives;
 - c. Evaluation of the program by all participants, including individual written responses, at the conclusion of the trip;
 - d. Sharing of the experience and information gathered by student participants during the trip with those students in the appropriate classes who were not able to go on the trip;
 - e. A report in writing or a presentation to the Superintendent and the Board, to be completed by the Lead Chaperone following the trip.
8. Student rules of behavior:
 - a. Students are subject to authority of the chaperones.

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- b. Students will be in their own rooms at the curfew time established by the Lead Chaperone. (Chaperones will make bed checks shortly after the curfew).
 - c. Students of opposite sex may not be in one another's room with the door closed.
 - d. Students may not leave their rooms once the bed check has been made.
 - e. Students are not permitted to change assigned hotel rooms.
 - f. Students must be on time for all scheduled activities.
 - g. Students must present themselves for each meal.
 - h. Students are not permitted to possess or to drink alcoholic beverages, or possess or use illegal drugs or possess or use tobacco products.
 - i. Individual students are not permitted to go off on their own. Free time provides an opportunity for independent activities and the pursuit of personal interest. Students must engage in these activities in designated groups of at least four students.
 - j. Each student must always sign out in person with his/her assigned chaperone, indicating the destination, companions and time of return. Upon returning, each student must sign in in person.
 - k. Students may not travel on public transportation without a chaperone.
9. Student responsibilities:
- a. Each student and his/her parent(s) will sign a written contract that identifies student responsibilities during the travel study trip. These responsibilities include:
 - b. Students are responsible for making appropriate restitution for any damage, costs, etc., incurred as a result of their actions.
 - c. Prior to departure from the hotel, students must pay for phone calls and any other incidental expenses incurred at the hotel.
 - d. Students must be considerate and respectful of the rights of other guests at the hotel. The law abroad protects the right of any individual to a restful night's sleep and the police will enforce this right.
 - e. Students are expected to participate in all planned group activities.
 - f. Students are warned that carrying or using drugs in foreign nations is an offense that is punishable by immediate imprisonment. The chaperones and tour leaders cannot be responsible for obtaining the release of any student who so violates the law. Even consular intervention may bring about the release of the offender. Required medication should be prescribed by a doctor and properly labeled.
 - g. Passports are vital documents. Students must not surrender passports to anyone without consular advice.
 - h. Students are expected to show consideration and respect for their fellow students, chaperones, guides, bus drivers, and hotel and restaurant personnel, and particularly show respect for the residents of the location they are visiting.
 - i. Any student who violates a rule will be subject to disciplinary action upon returning to school. Suspension from school may be considered the appropriate sanction depending upon the nature of the rule violated.

10. Chaperone responsibilities:

The chaperones' primary responsibility is the safety and security of the students in their charge. To that end, the following responsibilities have been established for chaperones:

- a) Only district employees may be assigned chaperone responsibilities.
- b) Chaperones may not consume alcohol in the presence of students. Such consumption should be limited and never result in impaired judgment or interfere with the chaperone's ability to perform his/her responsibilities.
- c) Chaperones will be assigned supervisory responsibility for specific students at a ratio not to exceed 8 students to 1 chaperone;
- d) The Lead Chaperone will establish a nightly curfew for students and communicate that curfew to all chaperones and students;
- e) Chaperones will conduct a nightly bed check at curfew with visual confirmation that students are present in their own rooms;
- f) The Lead Chaperone will implement the approved overnight supervision plan;
- g) Chaperones will report all violations to the Lead Chaperone who will inform the building principal.
- h) When the Lead Chaperone has reason to believe that a student has violated any rule of student behavior, he/she will notify the student immediately that the student may face disciplinary action upon return to school.
- i) The Lead Chaperone will create a plan for alternative activities in the event of a cancellation of planned activities.

Non-chaperoning adults must follow the same behavior guidelines as chaperones when in the presence of students to act as appropriate role models for students. A non-chaperoning adult must notify the Lead Chaperone if he/she witnesses any student violating a rule of student behavior.

Cross ref: 4332.1, Student Transportation for School Sponsored Travel
4531, Field Trips and Excursions

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