

## FIELD TRIPS

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for student trips and to identify the general process to be followed for review and approval of trip requests.

### II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The general expectation of the school board is that all student trips will be well planned, conducted in an orderly manner and safe environment, and will relate directly to the objectives of the class or activity for which the trip is requested. Student trips will be categorized within three general areas:

#### A. Instructional Trips

Trips that take place during the school day, relate directly to a course of study, and require student participation shall fall in this category. These trips shall be subject to review and approval of the building principal and shall be financed by school district funds within the constraints of the school building budget. Fees may not be assessed against students to defray direct costs of instructional trips. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.37, Prohibited Fees)

Field trips need to be age appropriate, focus on curriculum objectives and, if possible, expose students to learning and exploration not found in our local communities (i.e. museums, historical/political sites, colleges/universities, cultural centers and celebrations, etc.). Field trip opportunities are to be optional for students. Parents may request that students “stay behind.”

#### B. Supplementary Trips

This category pertains to those trips in which students voluntarily participate and which usually take place outside the regular school day. Examples of trips in this category involve student activities, clubs, and other special interest groups. These trips are subject to review and approval of the activities director and/or the building principal. Financial contributions by students may be requested. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.36, Authorized Fees)

Field trips designed as a reward or incentive for good behavior or academic accomplishment (i.e. attending professional sport contests, attending Hollywood produced films, amusement parks like Valley Fair, the circus, or recreational days

unrelated to curriculum goals, etc.) are limited to one trip per year/per grade/group when supported by regular school revenue. Trips sponsored by groups outside of school or trips paid by participants are not limited. Field trip opportunities are optional for students by parent request but students cannot be denied participation by district staff where they are curriculum focused. Reward/recreational field trips can be at the discretion of the school staff, students can be denied participation.

C. Extended Trips

1. Trips that involve one or more overnight stops fall into this category. Extended trips may be instructional or supplementary and must be requested well in advance of the planned activity. An extended trip request form must be completed and approved at each level: student, principal, superintendent, and school board. Exceptions to the approval policy may be granted or expedited to accommodate emergencies or contingencies (e.g., tournament competition).
2. The school board acknowledges and supports the efforts of booster clubs and similar organizations in providing extended trip opportunities for students.
3. The choice to take a field trip and the choice of the field trip topic and experience lie with the staff most directly involved. The budget allowed for field trips is the responsibility of the staff on site as that relates to the level of funding from the school budget allocation, a site team decision. The principal is ultimately responsible for authorizing and approving student field trips.

D. Out of State Field Trips

It is with the belief that field trips give students an opportunity to experience, to learn, and to share talents in environments other than our school and community, that we support the notion of major field trips. This policy will offer guidelines.

1. Out of state field trips should combine aspects of performance, educational opportunity and entertainment as students participate in these activities.
2. All out of state field trips will be held during the summer. Exceptions may be considered and approved by the superintendent.
3. One major music field trip will be allowed once every three years. Aitkin High School Concert Choir and Aitkin High School Concert Band members will be allowed to make the trip. The music directors along with

a high school administrator shall be responsible for planning the extent of the field trip.

4. The field trip plan will be presented to the Board of Education for approval six months before the trip is scheduled to occur. As complete an itinerary as possible will be presented to the Board at that time.
5. Dollars to defray costs of the out of state field trips will come from a variety of sources. For the music trips, the majority of funds will be generated by fund raisers conducted by the Music Department.
6. Chaperones for the trip will be selected from the "Application Form for Chaperone," based on the established "Chaperone Agreement" guidelines.
7. The district shall incur no costs for those field trips.

E. Chaperone Agreement for Out of State Trips

1. Assist with student fund raising.
2. Participate in chaperone meetings before and during the trip.
3. Conduct luggage check(s) before leaving.
4. Be on duty 24 hours a day (limited sleeping time, average five hours a night).
  - Coordinate student activities (ex. Ordering pizzas, acting as a personal banker).
  - Check to see that students are up every morning.
  - Take attendance everywhere we go.
  - Be on duty during student free time (hotel, amusement parks, etc.).
  - Check rooms at night after curfew.
  - Willing to have students sleep in chaperone's room for discipline purposes.
  - Prepare student picnic(s) and be responsible for the cleanup.
  - Able to take charge of an emergency situation (student illness, student unwisely associating with strangers, student accused of shoplifting, etc.).
  - One chaperone must be willing to drive extra vehicle.
5. Be able to assume equal share of discipline.
6. Refrain from alcohol and tobacco during course of trip.

- F. The minimum number of chaperones should be one for every ten students. The **recommended** selection should be:

4-Directors and spouses

2-Administrator and spouse

6-Parents, teachers or interested members of community.

The final selection of chaperones will be determined by the music directors and the high school administrators.

### III. REGULATIONS

- A. Rules of conduct and discipline for students and employees shall apply to all student trip activity.
- B. The school administration shall be responsible for providing more detailed procedures, including parental involvement, supervision, and such other factors deemed important and in the best interest of students.
- C. Transportation shall be furnished through a commercial carrier or school-owned vehicle.
- D. An employee may use a personal vehicle to transport staff or personal property for purposes of a field trip upon prior, written approval from administration.
- E. An employee must not use a personal vehicle to transport one or more students for purposes of a field trip.
1. If immediate transportation of a student is required due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, such as the illness or injury of a child, and the transportation does not constitute regular or scheduled transportation, a personal vehicle may be used. To the extent a personal vehicle is used, the vehicle must be properly registered and insured.
  2. An employee must obtain preapproval by administration of student transportation by a personal vehicle, pursuant to Section III.E.1, if practicable. If preapproval by administration of use of a personal vehicle cannot be obtained in a reasonable time given the circumstances, an employee shall report the relevant facts and circumstances justifying the need for use of a personal vehicle to administration as soon as practicable. The relevant facts and circumstances for use of a personal vehicle shall be documented by administration.

#### IV. SCHOOL BOARD REVIEW

The superintendent shall report to the school board upon the utilization of trips under this policy.

**Source:** Aitkin Independent School District No. 0001, Aitkin, MN

**Legal References:** Minn. Stat. § 123B.36 (Authorized Fees)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.37 (Prohibited Fees)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.49 (Cocurricular and Extracurricular Activities; Insurance)  
Minn. Stat. § 169.011, Subd. 71(a) (Definition of a School Bus)  
Minn. Stat. § 169.454, Subd. 13 (Type III Vehicle Standards – Exemption)  
*Sonkowsky v. Board of Educ. for Indep. Sch. Dist. No. 721*, 327 F.3d 675 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2003)  
*Lee v. Pine Bluff Sch. Dist.*, 472 F.3d 1026 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2007)

**Cross References:** MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 423 (Employee – Student Relationships)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 707 (Transportation of Public School Students)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 709 (Student Transportation Safety Policy)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 710 (Extracurricular Transportation)

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Application Form for Out-of-State Chaperone

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a child involved in this trip? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a current background check? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

What strengths do you feel you have as a chaperone?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are your experiences with high school students, especially as a chaperone?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is your spouse willing to work as a chaperone as well? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

If not, would you be willing to share a room with another chaperone? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read the chaperone agreement? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

If you are willing to work with its conditions, please sign below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date