

2340 SCHOOL TRIPS

The Westfield Board of Education recognizes that school trips are an important part of the educational program for pupils. However, because school trips taken during the school day take time away from academics and may affect student progress, the frequency and educational value of school trips must be balanced against the loss of instructional time.

The following types of school trips are recognized by the Board and governed by this policy: curricular trips, extra-curricular trips, enrichment trips, overnight trips and international trips. All field trip destinations must be pre-approved by the Board of Education.

All Overnight and International trips for which the Board of Education assumes liability must have Board of Education approval as stipulated in Regulation 2340. Overnight and International trips that do not seek approval of the Board of Education but do include employees of the district and students of the district are not sanctioned "school trips" and, therefore, the Board of Education assumes no liability for these excursions. Employees of the district participating in non-Board of Education approved trips shall not use district resources including, but not limited to computers, email, and copy machines.

Definitions

A "curricular trip" is any excursion by a group of pupils away from the school premises, under the supervision of a teacher, which is integrally related to an approved instructional program.

An "extra-curricular trip" is any excursion by a group of pupils, away from school premises, under the supervision of a teacher, which is related to a school club, a school competition, an athletic event, or other elective school activities.

An "enrichment trip" is any excursion by a group of pupils away from school premises, under the supervision of a teacher, which is not directly related to the curriculum but seeks to broaden student learning by offering a cultural experience, such as a visit to a theater or musical event.

An "overnight trip" is an approved excursion by a group of pupils away from the school premises for more than one day, including at least one night, that is supervised by teachers and relates to an academic or social goal of the school.

An "international trip" is any excursion by a group of pupils to another country that is supervised by teachers with the purpose of gaining fluency in the language, customs and culture of the country.

1. Curricular trips, because they directly support the curriculum, may be taken during school hours, and should be scheduled as close as possible to the time of the instruction that the trip is designed to support. However, teachers should consult with each other and the school administration to ensure that the school trips are not planned for the same week.
2. Extra-curricular trips should not be taken during school hours unless the purpose of the proposed trip can only be met (such as a competition) during school hours.
3. Enrichment trips, such as theatre trips, movies, and visits to restaurants, should not occur during school hours.
4. Overnight trips require specific Board approval.
5. International trips require specific Board approval. In general, international trips should be scheduled during vacation periods.

6. Supervision

Pupils on school trips remain under the supervision of the Board of Education staff. A pupil who violates or disregards the authority of supervisors on a school trip may be summarily dismissed from the trip. The teaching staff member in charge will make arrangements for the dismissed pupil to be sent home or back to school, as appropriate. The cost of such special transportation shall be borne by the parents or legal guardians of the pupil. The Board reserves the right to take further disciplinary action in accordance with Policy No. 5600 (Pupil Discipline).

7. Costs of school trips

All or part of the costs of a school trip shall be borne by the pupil's parents/guardians except that no pupil unable to afford the cost of a trip shall be prohibited from attending a school trip. Principals should coordinate school trip activities to prevent an unreasonable financial burden on families. Extra-curricular, enrichment, overnight and international trips are voluntary and the full cost shall be borne by the students participating in the trip.

8. Regulations

The Superintendent shall prepare regulations for the operation of school trips that:

- ensure that the health and safety of pupils are protected at all times;
- require parental permission in writing before any student leaves for a school trip; and
- monitor and evaluate the value and effectiveness of the out of school activities.

In addition, the Superintendent shall prepare regulations requiring that curricular trips be integrated with the curriculum.

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A. Approvals

School trips that are curricular, extra-curricular or enrichment must be approved by the principal. A completed copy of the school trip approval form signed by the principal must be sent to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Instruction and Programs four weeks in advance of the trip. Failure to comply with these time limits may result in non-approval by the Board of Education. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Programs will submit a list of field trip destinations to the Board of Education for final approval.

Overnight trips: All staff interested in planning an overnight trip must submit their intention to the building principal and, where appropriate, the content area supervisor, by the second Wednesday of September. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Programs will be provided a list from each principal and submit the district's complete list of proposed overnight trips for that school year at the first Curriculum, Instruction and Programs Committee meeting of the school year. Upon the Committee's approval, staff may begin planning the details of the trip as required on the "Overnight Trip" application. This completed application must be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent at least 60 days in advance of the trip so that the final details may be reviewed by the CIP Committee and submitted to the Board of Education for approval. Failure to comply with these time limits may result in non-approval by the Board of Education.

International trips: Staff planning international trips should allow themselves at least six months for managing the approval timeline taking into account that before planning may begin (reservations, collecting money, etc.) the building principal, the content area supervisor (where appropriate), the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instructions and Programs, and the Curriculum, Instruction and Programs Committee of the Board of Education must first approve the proposal. Once planning for the trip is approved, staff must complete the formal application for the international trip and submit it at least 60 days in advance of the trip so that the final details may be reviewed by the CIP Committee and submitted to the Board of Education for final approval. Failure to comply with these time limits may result in non-approval by the Board of Education.

B. Chaperones

For every school trip there must be a minimum of two adults, including one teacher, to assure safety and care of the group. There should be one adult for every 20 students attending the trip in grades 6 through 12. In the case of elementary students there should be one adult for every 15 students. For overnight trips where chaperones share sleeping quarters with students there must be at least two adult chaperones in each sleeping quarter. Adult chaperones who share sleeping quarters with students must be the same sex as the students in that sleeping quarter.

C. Trip Responsibility

For every school trip one staff member must be designated as the individual with overall responsibility for the trip. This individual will be responsible for the following activities:

1. ensuring sufficient chaperones,
2. contacting the building principal in the event of an emergency,
3. making a serious effort to become familiar with the trip destination to arrange food, bathroom accessibility, points of interest, and avoid potential hazards,
4. ascertaining whether any pupil participating on the trip will require medication in the course of the trip,
5. obtaining a completed school trip permission slip for each student participating on the trip.

D. Parental Consent

No student will be allowed to participate on a school trip unless his or her parent/guardian has signed a consent form allowing the student to attend the trip. The Parental Permission form should include the following information so that parents can make an informed decision about whether to permit their child to participate.

1. Trip destination.
2. Purpose of the trip.
3. Time of departure and return time.
4. Information about the type of transportation, school bus or coach bus.
5. Description of the types of student activities (swimming) that might pose a medical problem.
6. An emergency telephone number where the parent/guardian can be reached on the day of the trip.
7. For overnight trips it is essential that the parent be made aware of how emergency medical care will be provided.

E. Transportation

All trips must use busses that comply with New Jersey state law regulating safety and liability. Any school bus used by the district must have seat belts.

School trips going out of state or of a one-hour or more duration may use coach busses with bathroom facilities. Since these busses do not have seat belts, parents must be notified whenever such busses will be used. The parental permission slip shall include notification about lack of seat belts whenever coach busses are used.

The use of private automobiles is governed by Policy 8660.

F. Students Requiring Medication

Students participating on a school trip who require medication must be accompanied by a nurse or parent/guardian who can legally administer the medication at the appropriate times. Exceptions to the standard medication procedures may be permitted under special circumstances with the written permission of the parent and the consent of the family physician. Under no circumstances will a child be denied permission to attend a trip as a result of any disability.

G. Fiscal Responsibility

Staff arranging school trips must adhere to all district policies and requirements concerning the handling and accounting of money.

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