

Section I:

**Instructional
Goals and
Objectives**

Knox County Board of Education Policy

Descriptor Term:

Off-Campus Trips

Descriptor Code:

I-250

Issued:

7/95

Reviewed:

5/17

Revised:

8/17

1
2 The Board recognizes that student off-campus trips are sometimes justified for the purpose of achieving
3 the established educational goals of the school system. To safeguard the Board, its employees, and
4 students in matters of liability, all off-campus trips must be approved in advance by the Director of
5 Schools. Approval shall be contingent upon evidence that the trip is justified and planned according to
6 the provisions in this policy.

7 All field trips must receive prior approval from the school principal before being forwarded to the Director
8 of Schools. It is the responsibility of the principal to recommend field trips for approval ten (10) school
9 days prior to the proposed date.

10
11 **JUSTIFICATION**

12
13 Personnel arranging or approving a trip should have evidence that the experience will enhance the
14 achievement of established program objectives, and that the anticipated educational benefits of the trip
15 will justify the financial costs and the impact upon other school programs.

16 It is the responsibility of the principal to approve field trips only after the educational justification and
17 plans for any students not attending have been determined.

18
19 **APPROVAL**

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21 Written prior approval is required for all off-campus trips, both curricular and extra-curricular. Approval
22 must be obtained regardless of day of the week or time of day, and regardless of whether the event
23 originates in a school, in the central office, or in an outside agency. The approval procedure for regular
24 trips differs from the procedure for special trips, as described hereafter.

- 25
26 **1. Regular trips**, made on a scheduled basis and integral to the ongoing operation of an authorized
27 program, receive blanket approval of the Director of Schools and Board when program guidelines,
28 budgets, and schedules are approved. Examples of regular trips are the travel of interscholastic
29 athletic teams on an approved schedule and the transporting of vocational classes to training sites
30 on a routine basis. Requests for approval of such guidelines, budgets and schedules will be made
31 by program administrators by letter or forms specified for the program involved.
- 32
33 **2. Special trips** include one-time trips and any others not receiving blanket approval as regular trips
34 as described in item #1. Requests for approval of special trips must utilize the official **Off-**
35 **Campus Trip Approval** form. Channels for approval will include the principal, the appropriate
36 supervisor, the Director of Schools. Special trips may not be scheduled during school hours within
37 the final five (5) days of the school year.

38
39 Public announcements regarding planned field trips or receipt of field trip monies are not to be initiated
40 with students until the principal has been notified by the appropriate Central Office supervisor authorizing
41 the field trip request.

42

PLANNING

Advanced provisions must be made for safety and educational factors, including but not necessarily limited to the following items:

1. written permission of parents
2. the safety of participants
3. adult supervision
4. activities for achieving definite educational objectives
5. student orientation and follow-up critique
6. transportation
7. financial obligations
8. instruction and supervision of students not taking the trip

Requests for approval of field trips must be submitted to the principal on a Field Trip Request Form accompanied by a Field Trip Risk Assessment Form.

OUT-OF-COUNTY FIELD TRIPS

Requests for out-of-county field trips must include required forms for field trips, including the **Field Trip Risk Assessment Form**. Out-of-County and Out-of-State field trips require the appropriate supervisor's approval and must be submitted in a timely manner for this to occur before any financial commitments are made.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT

Prior to a scheduled field trip, it will be the responsibility of the supervising teacher to have signed parent/guardian permission forms on file for all participating students in the school office along with the name of the teacher supervising the trip. The departure time and return time must be clearly stated on the permission form and conveyed to students, parents, and school administration.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION/FEE WAIVER REQUESTS/SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

A student with an approved fee waiver who is eligible to participate in a regular field trip may not be excluded due to inability to pay his/her portion of the trip. Accommodations for students with disabilities shall be provided (i.e., special assistance, transportation, accessibility at site).

SUPERVISION

A certificated Knox County Schools employee must accompany students on any approved trip. Any violations of school rules and/or district policies shall be reported to the principal. Adult-to-student ratios may vary but must be adequate for the field trip activity and the number and age of the students. Teachers who accompany students on field trips may request a substitute if: a) they will be away from school a major portion of the day and/or b) the majority of their students will remain at school.

Non-certificated chaperones shall be 21 years of age or older. The certificated district employee will provide the chaperones with specific information regarding their responsibilities. Chaperones shall be responsible for the continuous monitoring of student activities. Knox County personnel and chaperones shall not consume alcoholic beverages, smoke, or use illegal substances while accompanying and supervising students on field trips. Supervisors/chaperones will model the same behavior as expected on school property.

- 1 • Student roll call will be taken before leaving school and again before departing the visitation site.
2 If any student is missing or injured, the student's parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.
3 One district employee will remain until the absent student or his/her parent/guardian arrives at the
4 site.
5
- 6 • When trips are scheduled to return after regular school hours, a certificated district employee must
7 supervise students after returning to campus. No students are to be left at the school unsupervised.
8
- 9 • In the event a student is not picked up within one (1) hour of the scheduled arrival time, the
10 supervising teacher will do the following:
11
 - 12 – Telephone the parent/guardian and stay with the student until the student's transportation
13 arrives.
 - 14 – If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted and all other resources are exhausted, the police
15 department may be called to assist.
 - 16 – In the event of unforeseen circumstances of a significant delay in return time, the supervising
17 teacher **must** contact the appropriate administrator immediately.
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19 **STUDENT FOREIGN TRAVEL/STUDY PROGRAMS**

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21 District-approved foreign travel shall adhere to established KCS field trip policies and school rules. All
22 organizations/companies supporting student foreign travel/study programs shall be duly licensed and
23 certified by agencies such as the Council of Student International Travel or the Council on Standards for
24 International Travel. The supervising teacher(s) shall follow all Board policies in planning, implementing,
25 and supervising students as referenced in the Out-of-County field trip section. Parents and students will
26 be made aware, prior to travel, that all school rules and district policies shall be followed with **no**
27 **exceptions**. Foreign travel shall not occur during the regular school calendar and only be approved during
28 scheduled breaks, (i.e., fall, spring, and summer). Participation in foreign exchange programs, not to be
29 confused with foreign travel, is not subject to scheduling restrictions.
30

31 Students on off-campus trips must comply with all school board policies. Rooms for overnight stays
32 during off-campus field trips are subject to search by school personnel on reasonable suspicion that a
33 student has violated school board policy.
34

35 All international travel will be subject to approval as determined by advisories issued by the U.S. State
36 Department. If the U.S. State Department issues a warning of the lowest level calling for U.S. citizens to
37 "consider the safety of travel" to a particular location then it will be assumed that all KCS foreign travel
38 will be suspended immediately. Due to the unpredictability of world affairs, approved trips can and will
39 be cancelled should events dictate. Travel insurance shall be a required component for all foreign travel
40 requests should cancellation of the trip is necessary.
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42 Students who participate in a foreign travel/study program do so as an enrichment activity. KCS will not
43 award credit for foreign travel or study programs.
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45 **FOOD AND BEVERAGE PROVISIONS/MANDATED LUNCH PROGRAM**

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47 All students eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch must be provided with a lunch when on a field trip
48 that occurs during the regular lunch period. School cafeteria managers shall be notified in advance if a
49 specific number of students will be participating on a field trip during the regular lunch period.
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FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The cost of the field trip will be a factor in the decision to approve the field trip. A statement of projected costs and fees to be charged for admission, transportation, etc. must be included in the field trip request.

Field trip expenses incurred by adult sponsors/chaperones should be included in determining the overall cost for the field trip; however, no profits shall be realized in excess of the cost of the trip.

Collection logs, payments, and receipts must be maintained in accordance with internal school uniform accounting procedures.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents shall assume responsibility for providing transportation for the children on off-campus trips unless transportation is specifically arranged by the school. When the school arranges transportation, it must utilize state-inspected school buses or commercial carriers except when the number of students does not warrant the expense, in which cases privately-owned vehicles may be used. When students pay the cost of a bus, a commercial carrier, or a privately-owned vehicle arranged by the school, the rate shall be negotiated by the owner and the principal. Regardless of who arranges the transportation – parent or school – liability coverage is the responsibility of owners and drivers, as the Board does not provide liability coverage except for Knox County-owned vehicles.

When school buses are used, principals are encouraged to use the buses which normally serve within the high school attendance zone involved, subject to cost and satisfactory service considerations. Bus rules must be obeyed. If any items are to be taken on the bus, they must be safely secured. The rear door must be clear at all times. The bus owner and/or the driver are responsible for enforcing this policy. The safety of the students while on the bus is a joint responsibility of the professional staff, the chaperones and the bus driver. The bus driver's primary responsibility is for providing a safe transportation method for students during the field trip. Once the students are off the bus, their conduct becomes the responsibility of the professional staff and chaperones. Off-campus trips to an out-of-county location or to a location that is greater than thirty (30) miles one way, whichever is the greater distance, shall have no more than two persons per seat for middle and high school students and three persons per seat for grades kindergarten through five.

LEASING OR RENTAL OF VEHICLES

Employees are not authorized to lease or rent any vehicle to transport students without prior authorization from the Director of Schools. Procurement procedures determined by the Knox County Purchasing Department shall be followed when school funds are used to pay for an approved lease or rental of a vehicle.

DRIVER DESIGNATION

Service providers shall submit in writing to the Transportation Department and building level administrator, or designee, the driver's name and driver identification number for all services originating at the building level.

When the school arranges for private cars to be used, the employee arranging the trip must inform drivers of their personal liability prior to listing their names on the approval form. Knox County Schools discourages students from driving to field trip events; however, in unique circumstances (as deemed by

1 the principal), students may drive if they hold an Intermediate Unrestricted License or a Regular Driver's
 2 License. If other students ride with a student, the student driver must have the following on file: a regular
 3 driver's license, proof of insurance, and a written parental permission to transport other students. Students
 4 who ride with another student must have written parental permission, including contact information.

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 6 Parents who transport students on field trips must provide proof of insurance to the principal. A copy of
 7 such must be on file in the principal's office.

8 9 **USAGE OF VANS**

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 11 Vehicles designed to transport more than ten (10) passengers, including the driver, shall meet school bus
 12 structural standards. Van type vehicles shall not be used for transporting students for instructional off-
 13 campus trips, athletic events, and other school approved functions.

14 15 **LIABILITY**

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 17 The Knox County Board of Education does not endorse, support, or assume liability in any way for any
 18 staff member who takes students on field trips not approved by the Board, the Director of Schools, and/or
 19 the principal.

20 21 **PUBLIC LAW 93-113, SECTION 504**

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 23 Under this federal law, no student may be deprived of an off-campus trip on the basis of handicap. The
 24 principal approving the trip shall ascertain that the appropriate accommodations have been made.

25 26 **NON-DISTRICT SPONSORED/BOARD-APPROVED STUDENT TRIPS**

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 28 Activities sponsored by non-Knox County Schools organizations, which recruit Knox County Schools
 29 students, and/or teachers to participate are neither approved nor endorsed by Knox County Schools.

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 31 • Teachers and school officials are prohibited from using their position to enlist students for a non-
 32 approved activity. Teacher and school officials are prohibited from soliciting student participation
 33 or collecting student payments during school hours for non-approved activities.
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 35 • A teacher's communication with students and/or parents regarding unofficial field trips must be
 36 independent of the school and of the teacher's employment. A teacher may not utilize the time,
 37 facilities, equipment or supplies of the district to communicate with students and/or parents
 38 regarding unofficial field trips, unless he or she follows Use-of-Facilities procedures.
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 40 • Field trips organized by individual teachers must clearly be identified as non-school sponsored
 41 activities to avoid district liability.
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