

FIELD TRIPS

I. ALL FIELD TRIPS

The following policies and procedures apply to all field trips.

Purpose

Educational field trips by definition are those that enhance the curriculum for the student. These trips should be designed to stimulate student interest, inquiry, and provide opportunities for sound growth and development.

Student Code of Conduct

All school rules as contained in the Student Handbook will be strictly enforced while all field trips are in progress.

Chaperones

C.O.R.I. Checks Required. Any person who may have direct and unmonitored contact with one or more students during the course of a field trip or travel experience covered by this policy shall submit to a Criminal Offender Records Investigation (CORI) check; and the results of said CORI check shall be determined to be satisfactory, according to the standards formally established by the School Committee, before she/he may participate in the field trip or travel experience with students. Fingerprint background checks will also be required for overnight and foreign trips.

Parental Notification

Parents/guardians should receive information about the purpose, objectives and planned activities of field trips. Information about need-based scholarships should be included in all notifications.

Parental Authorization

The parent or guardian of any student participating in school-sponsored travel, where the student is not yet 18 years old, is not legally emancipated, or is not legally competent, shall submit to the school a signed permission form. The permission form shall include appropriate authorization for providing emergency medical care and administering medication to the student.

Transportation

Only licensed carriers (e.g., King Ward, Peter Pan, etc.) approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee are to be used in transporting students, faculty and chaperones. *See exception for daytime trips in Section II.*

- The Superintendent or his/her designee will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The school system will not contract with any carrier

that has a safety rating of “conditional” or “unsatisfactory”. FMCSA ratings are available at <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/company-safety-records>.

- All carrier operators must have a satisfactory CORI check, and fingerprint check.
- The contract with the carrier will prohibit the use of subcontractors unless sufficient notice is given to the school system that allows verification of the subcontractor’s qualifications.
- Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.

Vans may be used to transport small groups of students with prior approval of the Superintendent.

Fundraising

The School Committee recommends the establishment and maintenance of a school-wide field trip account to be used to offset the total cost of field trips and for individual need-based scholarships. This fund will be part of the Student Activity Account.

If a field trip receives funds from the account, the teacher and students participating in the trip are encouraged to engage in fundraising activities to replenish the fund. The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students’ obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.

All students are encouraged to attend field trips. Financial constraint should not be a barrier to access and participation. Scholarships will be at the discretion of the principal.

If a school-wide account is not available and trip-specific fundraising takes place, it is the School Committee’s preference that fundraising be conducted as a group activity to offset the total cost of the trip and to ensure that all students have equal access. Fundraising activities that offset an individual student’s cost of a trip are also permitted.

Other Considerations

Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.

Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for privately run trips in the schools.

Field trips can include a “gift shop” stop or souvenir purchases but dedicated time for such activity should be limited..

If the large majority of members of a class are participating in a trip, but not all students, the school system should provide appropriate substitute activities for the students not participating.

II. DAYTIME FIELD TRIPS

In addition to the policies and procedures listed in Section I, the following conditions apply.

Approvals

Teachers shall be encouraged to make field trips for instructional purposes with the approval of the Superintendent.

Transportation

School buses can be used for daytime field trips with the approval of the superintendent and coordination with Transportation Coordinator.

III. OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS

In addition to the policies and procedures listed in Section I, the following conditions apply.

Purpose

Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.

Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered “optional school programs”, and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements. (See the Massachusetts Department of Education publication Student Learning Time Regulations Guide).

Approvals

All student trips sponsored by the Hadley Public Schools that are planned between the hours of midnight and 6:00 A.M. and/or any overnight travel must receive approval of the School Committee no less than thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled trip dates.

Requests should include the educational purpose of the trip and, to the extent known, logistical details including, but not limited to, itinerary, transportation, accommodation arrangements, costs and fundraising plans. The School Committee will consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost as part of its assessment process. The School Committee would appreciate a final reporting and evaluation of approved trips including number of participating students, cost and fundraising assessment, and student and sponsor evaluation of the trip.

The School Committee will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

Chaperones.

Fingerprint background checks will be required for overnight field trips.

Student Code of Conduct

Students are expected to comply with all school rules and policies as outlined in the Student Handbook. For overnight and foreign trips, the following student contract must additionally be signed by each student participating.

School: _____

Destination: _____

Dates: _____

In order to ensure a safe, trouble-free trip, students must sign this agreement. By doing so, students agree to accept full responsibility for their behavior as well as the consequences for failing to comply with the designated trip itinerary and all Hadley Public School rules as stated in the student handbook.

I (student name) _____ agree to comply with all school rules, Hadley Public School rules (as set forth in the student handbook) and those set up by (Tour Company) throughout the duration of the trip.

I agree to follow Tour Company and/or School itinerary exactly as stated, and will be at the specified locations at the designated times. I will not use controlled substances such as drugs and alcohol as this is forbidden by the policies of the Hadley Public Schools. I further agree to observe a nightly curfew as set forth by the chaperones. I will be in my assigned room at the specified times.

Violations of any of the above can result in the immediate termination of my trip. I understand that I will be sent home, and my family will be responsible for any costs incurred. Violation of school rules may result in my suspension from school. If I am a senior, it may also result in suspension from all Senior Week activities including Class Night, the class trip and graduation exercises.

Signature of Student

I have read the above policy and agree to the specified conditions:

Signature/s of Parent/s or Guardian/s /Chaperones

Date: _____

Sponsor/Chaperone/Parent Code of Conduct

Sponsors, chaperones and parents are expected to comply with all school rules and policies and to understand their obligations and responsibilities. Sponsors, as school employees, are fully responsible at all times for the health, safety and welfare of Hadley students. Chaperones and parents are also responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of participating students, at the direction of the sponsors, and are expected to abide by school rules and policies. For overnight and foreign trips, the following contract must be signed by all sponsors, chaperones and parents attending the trip.

School: _____

Destination: _____

Dates: _____

In order to ensure a safe, trouble-free trip, sponsors, chaperones and parents must sign this agreement. By doing so, they agree to accept responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of Hadley students, and to follow school rules and policies.

I (sponsor/chaperone/parent name)

_____ agree to comply with all Hadley Public School rules and those set up by (Tour Company) throughout the duration of the trip.

I agree to follow Tour Company and/or School itinerary exactly as stated, and will be at the specified locations at the designated times. I will not use controlled substances such as drugs and alcohol. I further agree to observe a nightly curfew.

Sponsors understand that violations of any of the above can result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or termination. Chaperones and parents understand that violations of any of the above can result in the immediate termination of the trip and that they could be sent home and will be responsible for any costs incurred.

I have read the above policy and agree to the specified conditions:

Signature of Sponsor/Guardian/Parent

Date: _____

Transportation and Accommodations

The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel is prohibited. Late night or overnight trips will use commercial motor coaches.

Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will include a pre-trip check of companies, drivers, and vehicles. CORI checks will be conducted in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, s. 38R.

Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind.

IV. FOREIGN TRIPS

In addition to the policies and procedures listed in Section I and Section III, the following conditions apply.

Although the School Committee recognizes the value of foreign travel, the School Committee assumes no responsibility for financial commitments, itinerary, arrangements, chaperone assignments, personal injuries, or personal inconveniences. Foreign travel constitutes a contractual arrangement between parent/guardian, student and the tour company.

Sponsors

Sponsor(s) of foreign travel must be a current employee of Hadley Public Schools.

School facilities may be scheduled at the discretion of the Principal for use after school hours by said individual or individuals to distribute relevant information about the program.

Parental/Guardian Consent

Sponsors are expected to hold at least two meetings for parents/guardians, at the preliminary planning stage and once final logistics have been arranged, and are expected to provide regular trip planning updates via email or other form of communication.

The dissemination of relevant information about the program shall include the following parental consent, release from liability and indemnity agreement. This agreement shall be signed by the parent/guardian:

[I, we] the undersigned [father, and/or mother/guardian and/or guardians] of _____, a minor, do hereby consent to [his/her] participation in the foreign travel program offered by _____ and do forever release, acquit, discharge, and covenant to hold harmless the Town of Hadley and/or the Hadley Public Schools from any and all actions, causes of actions, and claims on account of, or in any way growing out of, directly or indirectly, all known and unknown personal injuries or property damage which I/we may now or hereafter have as the parent of said minor, and also all claims or right of action for damages which said minor has or hereafter may acquire, either before or after [she, he] has reached [her, his] majority resulting from [her, his] participation in said program.

Signature(s)

Date

V. CLASS TRIPS

Class trips are generally defined as social and non-educational in nature. Policies and procedures outlined in Section I apply. Class trips that comply with the following guidelines will be considered.

1. A class trip must include at least 40% of the class.
2. Each Hopkins class will be limited to one officially designated class trip.
3. There should be one chaperone for every ten students; however, if there are fewer chaperones, each trip will be considered on an individual basis at the request of the Principal.
4. Class funds in the student activity account may be used to defer costs of the trip.
5. Each student must sign a trip permission form and each parent/guardian must sign a “hold harmless” agreement before the student is allowed on the trip.
6. An itinerary of the class trip will be submitted with the trip request. The itinerary will include relevant telephone numbers and addresses to be used in case of emergency.
7. All trips must be authorized by the Principal.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
- United Motorcoach Association-Student Motorcoach Travel Safety Guide (includes “Motorcoach Safety Checklist”)
<http://www.uma.org/consumerhelp/studentguide.asp>
- Department of Defense’s approved list of motor carriers
<http://www.mtmc.army.mil/content/504/approvedlist.pdf>

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: CHAPTER 346 OF THE ACTS OF 2002 (et al) approved on October 9, 2002 M.G.L. 69:1 B; 71:37N; 71:38R, 603 CMR 27:00

Field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. The School Committee will also encourage field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.

The Superintendent will establish regulations to assure that:

1. All students have parental permission for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.
5. All trips allow student access without regard of family ability to pay.

All out-of-state or extended (overnight) trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance approval of the School Committee. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

CROSS REF.: [JJH](#), Policy Relating to Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel

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