

## Procedure - Field Trips, Excursions and Outdoor Education

Field trips are defined as travel away from school premises, under the supervision of a staff member, with an approved course of study, for the purpose of affording students a direct learning experience not available in the classroom. The transportation costs for all such field trips conducted during school hours shall be borne by the district. The following procedures shall apply:

### Field Trips

- A. Each school may use a variety of different funding methods to pay for field trips.
- B. The staff member shall complete and submit a Student Travel Request Form at least two weeks prior to the field trip for in-state trips and 30 days prior for out-of-state or overnight field trips.
- C. The staff member shall contact the site to make specific arrangements for the field trip so that the desired activity can be coordinated with the classroom studies.
- D. The staff member shall be responsible for securing additional adult supervision for the trip (one adult to a maximum of ten students).
- E. If private vehicles are used, field trip forms shall be completed which acknowledge the name of the driver of each vehicle to be used. The principal will contact the district office to determine if the district's liability insurance coverage will protect the driver.
- F. A parent or guardian may be given an Opt-Out Notice for a field trip under certain circumstances and upon approval of the school building's principal.
  1. An Opt-Out Notice may be used for a field trip that (a) uses District transportation both to the event and back to school, (b) that occurs during the school day, (c) where the activity is located in Chelan County or Douglas County, and (d) includes 100 or more students.
  2. Reasonable attempts shall be made to inform parents of field trips and their right to opt-out their student. The Opt-Out Notice may be done through multiple means which may include written notice (mailed or sent home with the student) or automated telephone call to the number on file with the District for the parent. The staff member must provide the student's parent at least two Opt-Out Notices prior to the day of the field trip. The first Notice must be provided at least two weeks before the field trip. The second Notice must be provided at least three school days before the field trip.
  3. The Opt-Out Notice shall include (a) the date and time of the field trip, (b) the location of the field trip, (c) the type of transportation used, (d) a brief description of the activity, and (e) whether the student will be served lunch during the field trip.
  4. A parent wishing to opt-out their student from attending the field trip must contact the school's main office before the beginning of the field trip and inform the office administrative staff or the student's teacher (either in writing or verbally) of the parent's decision to opt-out the student from the field trip.
  5. An Opt-Out Notice may not be used for field trips that have water activities (swimming, boating, waterslides, etc.), snow sports (skiing, sledding, ice skating,

etc.), jumping activities (trampolines, bouncy houses, etc.), bicycling, skateboarding, horseback riding, target shooting, rock climbing, or similar activities that the school principal has determined to have a high risk to student safety.

- G. If an Opt-Out Notice is not used, then each student participating in a field trip must return a permission slip signed by his/her parent. Parents shall be informed if private vehicles are to be used for the field trip.
- H. A letter of appreciation should be sent to the site host upon completion of the field trip.

#### Permission Slips

- A. Principals have the primary responsibility to ensure that all procedures pertaining to field trip permission forms are followed by the school.
- B. Permission for field trips must be in written form only. Without a signed permission form, the student may not attend the trip.
- C. Permission slips are legal documents and may not be altered
- D. Permission forms, medical forms, or other signed field trip documents should be retained in the school office after the trip.
- E. Only parents/guardians are authorized to sign permission forms.

#### Student Conduct on Field Trips

- A. While participating in field trips, students will be representatives of the Wenatchee School District and must maintain good conduct and abide by school based rules and standards of behavior.
- B. Students who do not follow these risk being sent home from the field trip

#### Guidelines for Chaperones

- A. At least one chaperone on every field trip must be a Wenatchee School District employee from the school or department sponsoring the trip.
- B. All chaperones must be oriented to their duties, including a review of “Guidelines for Volunteer Chaperones”, a review of basic school rules, and an opportunity to ask the principal or lead district employee any questions about school-specific and trip-specific requirements.
- C. For all field trips, every effort should be made for chaperones to be representative of the student group and include males and females.
- D. Student-to-chaperone ratios are one adult to a maximum of ten students . Note that for students with disabilities, the ratio of staff to students should be at least the same as the ratio mandated in their IEPs for their classes
- E. All chaperones will conduct regular “head counts” throughout the trip.
- F. All lead chaperones must carry with them, at all times during the trip, a copy of the contact information for school principals or the superintendent in case of emergencies.
- G. If the principal or lead chaperone finds a student’s behavior unacceptable on a field trip and the student fails to correct his or her behavior, the student may be sent home after notifying the parent/guardian. The principal or lead chaperone will document their contact with the parent or guardian.

Note: The superintendent reserves the right to cancel any field trip up to and including the day of the departure if necessary to ensure student safety.

### Outdoor Education

- A. The outdoor education plans for the coming school year shall be presented to the board for approval at the May board meeting.
- B. All staff to be involved shall be notified of plans after board approval.
- C. The proposed curricula for the outdoor education school shall be presented to teachers at least one month prior to the session.
- D. Information to parents regarding fees and waivers or reductions if offered, special clothing, dates, supervising proposed activities, and other duties shall be sent to parents at least one month prior to the session. The parent must sign an approval form.
- E. If feasible, parents may opt to have their child participate in daytime activities only.
- F. Students who do not elect to attend shall engage in meaningful learning experiences at school.
- G. Students must purchase accident insurance or have family accident insurance.
- H. If the district can absorb the cost or has access to funds to cover waivers or reductions, students who are unable to pay the fee may be granted a waiver or reduction if they meet the USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines.

### Overnight/Out-of StateField Trips

In order to help ensure that District sponsored overnight field trips result in a safe and rewarding experience for all participants, we have prepared these guidelines:

- A. All out-of-state/overnight Field Trips requests must be submitted a minimum of 30-days prior to the date of the field trip using the Student [Travel Request Form](#).
- B. The request for an out-of-state/overnight field trip(s) is automatically submitted to District Administration to be placed on an upcoming Board Meeting Consent Agenda.
- C. An up to date list of all students attending the field trip is provided to the necessary individuals.
- D. Once a trip has been entered, notifications immediately go to the transportation department, school nurses, the nutrition department, and administrators, who are all part of the approval process and must “sign-off” on the trip.
- E. Transportation checks student lists for special needs and for vehicle availability.
- F. Nurses check for student medical needs, physical and/or diet restrictions so that everyone is prepared in an emergency.
- G. Nutrition services checks students for allergies and packs safe food for sack lunches.
- H. The requester must attain the correct ratio of chaperones to students (at least 1 Chaperone per 10 students). All chaperones are pre-screened through the volunteer background check process by school office staff according to district policy.
- I. After approval by the board, a written description of the overnight field trip shall be sent to the parent. All such field trips are optional. Parent permission is required.

### Guidelines for Room Assignments – Hotel Accommodations

- A. In the event that an overnight field trip will involve assigning students to rooms for hotel

accommodations, the district will, to the greatest extent possible, work to provide an opportunity for each student to have their own bed (i.e. roll-away, cot, foldout couch, etc.) within assigned rooms. In situations where this is not practical, effort will be made to accommodate student/parent/guardian requests for roommates or other potential accommodations.

- B. Adult supervisors must have rooms that are separate but adjacent to the rooms of students under their supervision.

### Becoming a Volunteer Chaperone

Because student safety is our paramount concern, Wenatchee Public Schools have established procedures for screening all school volunteers who may have unsupervised access to children. The District's website hosts the latest requirements. No volunteer may chaperone a field trip until a background check and other requirements are completed.

The District requires that volunteer chaperones be at least 21 years old to supervise students in grades 6-8, and 25 years old for students in grades 9-12.

### Guidelines for Volunteer Chaperones

Prior to the field trip, a district lead chaperone will provide volunteer chaperones with information regarding activities planned for the trip, expectations for supervision of students, and emergency procedures.

In addition, we have developed the following general guidelines to help all chaperones perform their duties.

- A. All school rules apply on District sponsored events. Chaperones are expected to comply with district policies, follow the directions given by the district's lead chaperone, work cooperatively with other staff and volunteers, and model appropriate behaviors for students.
- B. In order to comply with district policy during sponsored events, chaperones:
  - 1. May not use, sell, provide, possess, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
  - 2. May not use tobacco in the presence of, or within the sight of students
  - 3. May not possess any weapon
  - 4. May not administer any medications, prescriptions or non-prescription, to students
- C. Chaperones are expected to ensure students adhere to expectations. If a student will not follow reasonable requests to comply with behavior and safety rules, volunteer chaperones should notify the lead district chaperone.
- D. Students must be supervised at all times while at District sponsored events. Chaperones are expected to go over the use of the buddy system with students under their care and account for all students regularly and before changing activities. Chaperones must be readily available, mindful of safety concerns, and responsive to student needs.
- E. Night-time supervision can present different challenges. Chaperones must ensure that students are in their rooms or designated sleep areas and not engaged in prohibited activities. This will generally mean a bed check at lights out and at least one additional check during the night. Lead district chaperones will understand the requirements and

procedures for specific locations where students are lodging and share these expectations with volunteer chaperones. Different rules may need to be established for locations where students are staying in a gym, in open cabins, or in other non-traditional lodgings.

- F. For the protection of both the student and the chaperone, chaperones should not place themselves in situations in which they are alone with a student.
- G. Lead district chaperones will ensure that all volunteer chaperones receive information regarding what to do in the event of any emergency (medical emergency, natural emergency, lost student, serious breach of rule, etc.). Lead Chaperones will share with all volunteers the names of those trained in first aid, where first aid kits may be accessed, and who possesses copies of parental permission slips with emergency contact phone numbers and medical information.

### **International Travel**

Approval of international travel is subject to the United States Department of State travel warnings. Travel warnings are issued when the State department decides, based on all relevant information, to recommend that Americans avoid travel to a certain country. District travel to Canada and Mexico will be approved through the processes outlined in this Procedure for travel within the United States unless either country is identified through a travel warning. No district sponsored international travel will be approved to any other country when a worldwide caution is in effect.

- A. The staff member must submit to the principal a written request for approval, including purpose, supervision, itinerary, cost, housing, and student costs six months before the date of the trip and before any fundraising begins or deposits are placed for the trip.
- B. After approval by the principal, all requests for international trips must be submitted through the Student Travel Request form.
- C. After approval by the Board, a written description of the international, overnight field trip will be sent to the parent. All such international trips are optional. Parent permission is required.
- D. All signed parent permission forms and trip records will be kept on file at the school.
- E. Staff members and sponsors will obtain competitive pricing to assure maximum student participation at the lowest possible cost.

### **Privately Sponsored Field Trips**

A field trip is privately sponsored if no school funds, equipment, or materials are used and the school or district are not named in the promotional materials. All such materials should include clear and prominent notice that the trip is not sponsored by the school or the District. Planning or organizational meetings for privately sponsored field trips should be held off-site, or if on school property, according to the public use of school facilities guidelines. Enrollment at the school should not be a requirement for participation in privately sponsored field trips.

Note: Promotion of privately sponsored field trips by a teacher in his/her classroom or elsewhere during class time is, in most cases, a violation of this policy.

If a trip is privately sponsored, the individual or business organizing the trip will assume all responsibility for the safety of participants and may be personally liable for any incidents or

injuries that occur during the trip. Approval of the District is not required and the District will assume no liability for such trips.

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