

## **General Field Trip Policy**

### **Student Supervision**

Students shall be accompanied by a sufficient number of chaperones, taking into account the trip scheduling and logistics. All chaperones, including parents and volunteers, must have a CORI check in accordance with M.G.L. c.71 s.38R.

CORI checks are recommended but not required by law for bus drivers who do not regularly work for the school district and who will not have direct and unmonitored contact with students. If such checks cannot be done, a chaperone must always be present whenever students are on the bus.

All participating students must submit a signed parent/guardian permission form. Such form shall include appropriate authorization for emergency medical care and administration of medication.

All staff and students will be expected to follow the Richmond Consolidated School Code of Conduct. Richmond Consolidated School and Shaker Mountain School Union #70 will not be responsible for any expenses incurred as a result of a chaperone's decision to send a student participant home earlier than the scheduled return date due to a student's unacceptable behavior. Students and their parents/guardians will be held responsible for any damage done to hotels, rental properties, real or personal property. Parents/guardians must agree to pay for any damages that may be done by their son/daughter and/or aid school officials in collecting the money necessary to do so.

### **Transportation**

The use of vans or private automobiles should be avoided. Such trips should generally use school school buses or commercial motorcoaches.

Trips planned with commercial motorcoaches should involve pre-trip checks of companies.

School officials should ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the FMCSA and should not contract with any carrier that has an FMCSA safety rating of "condiditonal" or "unsatisfactory." FMCSA carrier ratings are available at <http://www.saferys.org/>.

The contract with the carrier should prohibit the use of a subcontractor unless sufficient notice is given to the district to allow verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

## **Overnight or Late Night Field Trips**

### **Trip Approval Process**

1. Advance approval by the school committee should be required for any student trip involving late night or overnight travel.
2. The approval process should be completed prior to engaging students in fundraising activities or other preparations for the trip. Ideally this vote will occur at the September RCS School Committee meeting.
3. 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.
4. Teachers and other school staff should be prohibited from soliciting privately run trips through the school system. The trip approval process should apply only to school-sanctioned trips; school committees should not approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.
5. Policies and procedures for trip approval should take into account all logistical details involving transportation, accommodations, fundraising required of students, and the educational value of the trip in relation to its costs.
6. The school health professional will be notified of all field trips prior to approval in order to plan for student health accommodations.

### **Transportation**

1. The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel should generally be avoided. Such trips should generally use commercial motorcoaches.
2. Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel should involve pre-trip checks of companies, drivers, and vehicles.
3. School officials should ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district should not contract with any carrier that has an FMCSA safety rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory." FMCSA carrier ratings are available at <http://www.saferys.org/>.
4. Districts which are unable to conduct their own in-depth reviews of bus carrier qualifications may elect to use ratings and prequalifications established by other public entities.
5. The contract with the carrier should prohibit the use of a subcontractor unless sufficient notice is given to the district to allow verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

### **Trip Scheduling**

1. Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, the trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m., due to the increased risk of vehicular accidents during this time period.

2. 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 under 603 CMR 27.00. However, academic field trips may be considered structured learning time (see the Department's Student Learning Time Regulations Guide). School districts may consider travel for field trips as included in students' schedules, but the Department recommends that schools consider scheduling additional structured learning time when significant travel time is anticipated (i.e., time outside the hours of the regular school day).
3. Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.
4. Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.
5. If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

### **Fundraising**

1. The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students' obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.
2. Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.
3. No student shall be denied the privilege of participating in a field trip or school-sponsored trip because of the financial inability to pay the fee. However, students will be expected to fundraise school sponsored events to help defray the cost of the trip.

### **Field Trips - One Day or Less**

#### **Approval Process**

1. Approval of all field trips and school-sponsored trips shall be conditional by the principal one month prior to the trip.
2. Approval for any field trip may be revoked if a change in circumstances, whether man-made or natural, would warrant cancellation of this field trip or school sponsored trip in the interest of the safety of the students and staff of Richmond Consolidated School.
3. All participating students must submit a signed parent/guardian permission form.
4. The school health professional will be notified of all field trips prior to approval in order to plan for student health accommodations.
5. All school personnel accompanying the class on the trip shall submit an absence report form to the Principal.

#### **Programming and Cost**

1. All trips should contribute substantially to the educational program and curriculum.

2. No student shall be denied the privilege of participating in a field trip or school-sponsored trip because of financial inability to pay the fee.

First Reading: April 8, 2014

Second Reading: May 11, 2014

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