

# POLICY

SOMERSET COUNTY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

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<b>Subject:</b> Student Field Trips	<b>Date Approved:</b> July 19, 1983 May 15, 2012 <b>Date Revised:</b> June 16, 1987 January 19, 1988 May 4, 1989 July 20, 2004 April 3, 2012 <b>Date Effective:</b> May 4, 1989 July 20, 2004 May 15, 2012

## 1. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines to assist in the planning, execution, and evaluation of all student field trips.

## 2. POLICY

Field trips when properly planned and executed can offer students many worthwhile educational experiences that would not otherwise be provided from the regular classroom experience. Therefore, students shall not be denied access to field trip opportunities because of disability or economic status. Efforts shall be made to find ways to maximize participation by interested and qualified students in these field trips.

### A. Nature and Function - General

- (1) Field trips as used in this policy may be referred to as a school excursion, i.e., school trip, school journey, direct visit of an educational resource off the school grounds.
- (2) Field trips must be used to provide direct purposeful experiences in light of well defined educational objectives.
- (3) High School field trips to amusement and/or theme parks for recreational purposes will not be approved with the exception of one trip per school year for each senior class.
- (4) Field trips to amusement and/or theme parks for elementary or middle school students for educational purposes, will be approved provided these purposes are well defined and delineated, including pre-trip instructional activities, educational objectives, and post-trip writing assignment(s) related to the objectives which are to be attached and forwarded with the Request For Approval Form.

- (5) Trips within the county can be approved at the school level by the building Principal. However, the Superintendent's office or central office designee should be notified.
- (6) Transportation used must meet the requirements as set forth in Board of Education policy related to Student Transportation.
- (7) Trips planned for outside the county or overnight are to be approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee at least 60 days prior to the trip..
- (8) The ratio of students to teachers is to be planned in light of such factors as the objectives of the trip, maturity of the students, the distance and time from the school.
- (9) Parents should always be informed regarding proposed field trips. For all trips, written permission slips should be prepared for parental approval and signature.
- (10) School Nurses shall be notified of all field trips to ensure that appropriate medical coverage is provided for the students on the trip.

**B. Purpose of Field Trips**

- (1) Because of time, finance, and effort, a field trip must justify itself in terms of goals or objectives of the school, and the educational purposes to be gained.
- (2) Purposes should be understood by those who are to benefit from the trip and by those who have responsibilities for the trip.
- (3) The number of field trips in which any student may participate should be restricted to a reasonable number during the school year. Elementary and middle school students are permitted not more than two field trips during a school year and high school students not more than four field trips.
- (4) Band, athletic, and choral trips are excluded when determining the number of field trips a student has participated in.

**C. Plan and Execution**

- (1) The learner tends to focus on that for which he has been motivated. Adequate preplanning is essential for an effective field trip.
- (2) Trips planned in the school and made on school days or non-school days are to be considered trips sponsored by the school.
- (3) Arrangements with authorities at the destination point are made in advance.
- (4) Financial responsibility in case of accident must be provided.
- (5) All trips are to be planned and executed only with the approval of the building principal.
- (6) Clearly stated goals, objectives, assignments, and follow-up activities must accompany the Request For Approval - Out of County Trip Form.

- (7) Standards of Social Behavior policy (#600-17) and all school instructions remain in effect at all times during the field trip.
- (8) If there is a reasonable belief that a student has in his or her possession an item, the possession of which is a criminal offense under the laws of this State or a violation of any other State law or rule or regulation of the Board, that student may be searched according to SCPS 600-40.

**D. Responsible Adult Participants**

- (1) Each school trip should have a certificated employee/Teacher of Somerset County Public Schools who accompanies and supervises students on the trip. The sponsoring employee is in charge of planning and implementation of the trip and ensures compliance with the policies of the Board of Education.
- (2) Each sponsoring employee must ensure there are adequate male and female chaperones available for all overnight trips.
- (3) Chaperones/Volunteers that accompany and supervise students on a field trip must be 21 or older and have completed a volunteer form. All Chaperones/Volunteers on an overnight trip must have a national background check that includes fingerprints prior to the trip and have been cleared by human resources.

**E. Evaluation**

- (1) Evaluations are made in light of the objectives of the trip.
- (2) Evaluations should be made by those who proposed, planned, and experienced the trip.
- (3) Evaluation results should be available to other school groups.