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Field Trips & Student Travel Policy (Domestic and International)

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Purpose and Scope

District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) supports instructional field trips and student travel to enhance school's educational objectives. A field trip is defined as a planned curricular or extracurricular experience for students directly related to and correlated with a specific unit of study or specialized function of the school. Field trips are recognized as a viable means of providing educational opportunities that would not be available in the classroom.

This policy applies to all **DCPS-sponsored trips**. A trip meeting any of these criteria is considered a "DCPS-sponsored" trip:

- The trip is planned, in any part, by a DCPS employee acting in their DCPS capacity or during their DCPS tour of duty (i.e., a teacher who is hired to serve as a coach for a partner organization outside of their tour of duty may plan a non-DCPS sponsored trip as long as they don't do it during the school day);
- The trip takes place during the school day; or
- The trip is funded, in any way, by DCPS money, money donated directly to DCPS, or money collected from students by DCPS.

This policy conveys District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) requirements for all DCPS-sponsored field trips and student travel involving DCPS students. All covered trips must be planned and executed in accordance with this policy. Any DCPS-sponsored field trip that is not planned for and approved in accordance with this policy is subject to cancellation or early termination by DCPS and all associated costs will be the responsibility of the school or trip sponsor. DCPS staff are prohibited from participating in any student travel that has not been fully approved pursuant to this policy.

This policy does **not** apply to local District of Columbia Interscholastic Athletics Association (DCIAA) athletic events. However, **any scrimmage, non-league contest, or tournament involving a trip that is more than 50 miles away or includes an overnight stay must follow this policy.**¹

This policy supersedes any other DCPS policy on field trips and student travel. For questions about this policy, including the applicability of this policy to a planned trip, please email dcps.field-trips@k12.dc.gov.

¹ Athletic directors and coaches must review and follow the governing rules of the DCIAA Athletics Handbook, available at thedciaa.com/mission-and-values.

Authority and Applicable Law

Source	Citation
District of Columbia Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DC Official Code § 1-329.01 – Acceptance of gifts and donations - DC Official Code § 38-174(c)(5) (Chancellor’s authority to promulgate rules regarding DCPS-sponsored student travel) - DC Official Code § 38-2955(b) (authorizing DCPS to spend appropriated fund to pay for DCPS-sponsored student travel and related costs) - DC Official Code § 4-1501.03 (volunteer background check requirements)
District of Columbia Municipal Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5-B DCMR § 2306 – Field Trips and Student Travel - 5-B DCMR § 2501.1 – Student Discipline; Applicability
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student Transportation Policy - Government of the District of Columbia Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) District of Columbia Public Schools Standard Operating Procedure Manual Student Activity Fund (SAF) (revised August 2022) - Records Retention Schedule

Key Terms and Definitions

Chaperone means any adult providing supervision to DCPS students during a field trip under the direction of the **trip sponsor**, including DCPS staff and volunteer chaperones (including parents/guardians). All chaperones must meet the requirements on pages 19-20. Employees of educational travel vendors are not chaperones and may not supervise students. Must be aged twenty-one (21) or older.

Day Trip means travel that involves students returning on the same day as departure and must be less than 50 miles.

DCPS-Sponsored Trip means any trip involving DCPS students that meets any of the criteria on pages 5, 9-10.

Domestic Field Trip means any trip in which the destination is within the United States, including Alaska, Hawaii, all United States Commonwealths (Puerto Rico, Northern Mariana Islands), and United States territories (American Samoa, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands).

International Field Trip means any trip in which the destination is outside of the United States for any portion of the trip. International field trips are exclusively for students in grades 6-12.

Local Trip means travel that takes place within fifty (50) miles of DCPS Central Office: 1200 First St. NE, Washington DC, 20002.

Non-Chaperone Adults means parents, guardians, and other primary caregivers who accompany their student on a *day trip* under the guidance and supervision of DCPS employees. Background clearance is required for any non-chaperone adult attending more than one field trip.

Non-DCPS Sponsored Field Trip means a trip involving one or more DCPS students and one or more DCPS employees that is: (1) planned and organized outside of normal school operating hours and without connection to DCPS staff or property; (2) takes place entirely outside of normal school operating hours; (3) does not consider students' participation in a certain class, program, curriculum, club, extracurricular activity, or other educational or social initiative offered by DCPS when selecting the participating students, and (4) not funded in any way by DCPS money, money donated directly to DCPS, or money collected from students by DCPS. DCPS employees who organize or participate in, or who have knowledge of, trips of this type are subject to the requirements on page 9-10. Non-DCPS sponsored field trips should not be recorded in the field trip QuickBase app.

Non-Local Trips means travel that takes place beyond fifty (50) miles of the DCPS Central Office, located at 1200 First St. NE, Washington DC, 20002.

Overnight Trip means any trip that involves students staying overnight.

Partner-Sponsored Trip means a trip involving DCPS students organized by a partner organization, parent organization (PTA/PTO/similar), or a trade or professional organization that takes place *entirely outside of school hours* and does not involve DCPS employees acting in their DCPS employment capacity. These cannot be funded in any way by DCPS money, money donated directly to

DCPS, or money collected from students by DCPS.

Student Activity Fund means funds used to finance recognized extracurricular activities of the student body, as authorized by the principal, for which there is no allocation of funding from the annual budget. The use of the Student Activity Fund (SAF) is governed by policies and procedures established by the Government of the District of Columbia Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO).

Trip Sponsor means the DCPS employee who oversees field trip planning and coordination and provides primary supervision during the trip. The trip sponsor must accompany the students during travel.

DCPS-Sponsored & Non-DCPS Sponsored Trips

A trip meeting any of these criteria would be considered a “DCPS-sponsored” trip:

- The trip is planned, in any part, by a DCPS employee acting in their DCPS capacity or during their DCPS tour of duty (i.e., a teacher who is hired to serve as a coach for a partner organization outside of their tour of duty may plan a non-DCPS sponsored trip as long as the trip is not during the school day);
- The trip takes place during the school day; or
- The trip is funded, in any way, by DCPS money, money donated directly to DCPS, or money collected from students by DCPS.

Failure of a DCPS employee to adhere to the requirements below while planning a DCPS-sponsored organized trip may be subject to progressive discipline, up to and including termination. Discipline for employees who are members of a collective bargaining agreement will be subject to the provisions of their union contract. The requirements for DCPS employees include:

- Submitting all required documents and approvals prior to taking the trip;
- Following chaperone duties;
- Transparency and documentation around field trip costs; and
- Reporting any incident that occurs to principal, DCPS central office, and families and following the Incident Reporting Tool (IRT) process.

If a field trip falls outside of the above criteria, it is a “non-DCPS sponsored trip.” Non-DCPS sponsored field trips should not be recorded in the field trip QuickBase app since DCPS employees are not involved in planning. The expectations and limitations DCPS places on its employees’ abilities to organize and participate in non-sponsored trips are below.

When a DCPS employee plans non-DCPS sponsored trips, the employee must:

- Provide parents of all participating students, and all participating adult students, with the *Non-DCPS Sponsored Field Trip Notification Form* (see Appendix IV) stating that the trip is not sponsored by DCPS and that DCPS assumes no responsibility regarding any aspect of the trip;
- Certify that the parents of all participating students and all adult students have been notified that the trip is not sponsored by DCPS;
- Not organize the trip during instructional time or tour of duty;
- Not organize the trip while either on DCPS property or using DCPS property, such as a DCPS-issued computer or cell phone;
- Not advertise the trip as DCPS-sponsored;
- Not advertise the trip while on DCPS property, either verbally or via another tangible medium;
- Not name DCPS on any related contract or use school or DCPS letterhead (including DCPS permission forms and emails) to advertise or convey any information about the trip; and
- Ensure that selection of students participating on the trip does not consider the students’ participation in a certain class, program, curriculum, club, extracurricular activity, or other educational or social initiative offered by DCPS.

The approval process outlined in this directive does not apply to non-DCPS sponsored field trips. However, the DCPS employee organizing the non-DCPS sponsored field trip is responsible for submitting

completed copies of the *Non-DCPS Sponsored Field Trip Notification Form* (see Appendix IV) to their supervisor and the principal(s) of the school that each student participant attends.

Requirements for All Field Trips

Approval Procedures and Funding Sources

All DCPS-sponsored fields trips must be entered and approved in a centralized system maintained by the DCPS Central Services Office of Schools. Submission deadlines and approval procedures vary by trip type.

Initial Approval – All Trips

Initial approval of all DCPS-sponsored fields trips and student travel is required before any funds may be collected, encumbered, or spent. Initial approval decisions are made by the following individuals:

Trip Type	Initial Approver	Final Approver
Domestic (Day, Local)	Principal	Principal
Domestic (Day, Non-local)	Principal	Instructional Superintendent
Overnight	Principal	Instructional Superintendent
International	Instructional Superintendent, in consultation with the Global Education Team	Deputy Chancellor

Final Approval

The final approval process for each of the following trip types may be found in the following appendices:

- Domestic (Day, Local) – Appendix I: Domestic Trip Approval Procedures
- Domestic (Day, Non-Local) – Appendix I: Domestic Trip Approval Procedures
- Overnight – Appendix I: Domestic Trip Approval Procedures
- International Trips – Appendix II: International Trip Approval Procedures

Financial Considerations for Field Trips

Trip sponsors, with support and oversight from the principal, business manager, and/or Director/Manager of Strategy and Logistics, are responsible for all financial aspects of trip planning, including contractual arrangements.

Affordability and Fees

Field trips should be planned to permit every student to participate and thus should be planned at the lowest possible cost. Schools must provide financial options to ensure maximum participation for all interested and qualified students regardless of their economic circumstances. No student may be denied participation in a DCPS sponsored field trip that is integral to the curriculum and the instructional program, for financial reasons. Reduced cost, if available, will apply to all persons going on the trip. The following requirements apply:

- Fees associated with optional field trips may be passed on to students if approved by the principal.
- The fees may not exceed the cost of the field trip.
- The cost of the field trip may include the cost of only the required number of chaperones (in alignment with field trip policy and Office of Risk Management requirements).
- Communications to parents or students requesting payment of student fees must include information regarding the availability of financial assistance, including fee waivers.
- Fees and costs associated with required or core curricular trips, e.g., Cornerstones, DCPS Study Abroad, or course-culminating activities, may **not** be passed on to students and families.
- Per diem payments cannot be provided to adult chaperones for overnight field trips.

Procurement

DCPS and the school will not bear any financial responsibility for trips, whether for instructional or enrichment purposes, if they are not processed through the proper procurement policies and procedures. **No travel arrangements may be made, and no funds may be collected or expended until initial approval is received.**

For all field trips, regardless of funding sources, Trip sponsors must work with their school's principal, business manager, and Director/Manager of Strategy and Logistics to prepare and submit a trip budget that identifies the amount and funding source for all trip-related costs.

For field trips that are funded by DCPS local or grant funds, the trip sponsor must work closely with the principal, business manager, and/or Director/Manager of Strategy and Logistics, or appropriate Central Services staff, to use the P-Card or enter requisition(s) as soon as initial approval has been granted.

Funding Sources and Limitations

Appropriated Funds

DCPS is authorized to spend appropriated funds to pay for DCPS-sponsored student travel, including the cost of transportation, lodging, meals, and admission fees for students and chaperones. Travel using appropriated funds must be related to the students' curriculum or for the purpose of rewarding student curricular or extra-curricular achievement.² When submitting a request for student travel using

² D.C. Official Code § 38-2955(b).

appropriated funds, the trip sponsor and principal must certify in writing that the trip is either related to the students' curriculum or is for the purpose of rewarding student curricular or extra-curricular achievement.

Non-Appropriated Funds: Student/Parent Payments

After initial approval has been obtained, the trip sponsor, in partnership with the principal, will follow the established procedures for handling non-appropriated funds for funds contributed by the parents/guardians and/or fundraised by students or staff members.

All collected funds must be deposited into the Student Activity Fund (SAF). The principal is responsible and accountable for the use and disbursement of SAF funds. A receipt will be issued at the time of a student's deposit of funds with the purpose of the deposit noted, and a copy must be kept on file in the principal's office. A sub account in the school's SAF account should be maintained for each field trip to ensure funding transparency.

Donations

All donations from all sources, including donations from parent organizations (PTO/PTA/HSA, etc.) and School Program Providers, must be documented and accounted for through DCPS Central Services. This includes donations for DCPS-sponsored field trips.

All donations with an actual or estimated value over \$500 must be processed and approved through the Mayor's Office of Partnership and Grant Services and set up in the District's financial system of record, (DIFS). Documentation may be submitted through the process detailed at <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/make-donation-dcps>.

Questions about donations should be directed to the DCPS Partnerships Team at DCPS.Partnership@k12.dc.gov.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Additional specific considerations must also be provided as follows:

Students with Disabilities

Students with 504 plans and individualized education programs (IEPs) cannot be denied access to field trips due to their disability. Students with Section 504 plans and IEPs must be provided equal opportunity for participation, including transportation to and from the field trip site(s) and all planned educational and recreational activities that take place at the field trip site(s). As part of the planning and implementation process, trip sponsors should discuss field trip accessibility with the school LEA representative and/or Section 504 coordinator if any student participants have an IEP or 504 plan. Participating students' IEP or Section 504 plan should be available to any staff coordinating and/or participating in the field trip. If a student with a disability needs accommodation or related aids and services to participate in the field trip, those supports must be provided.

Multilingual Learners

Multilingual learners cannot be denied access to field trips due to their English learner (EL) status. If necessary, language accommodations and modifications should be discussed.

Transgender and Gender-Expansive Students

DCPS is committed to providing safe and supportive accommodations for all students, including transgender and gender-expansive students, including during field trips. Transgender and gender-expansive students can be provided private rooming accommodations to ensure their sense of safety. Trip sponsors may also coordinate with transgender and gender expansive students to assist them with selecting classmates to room with, such as a close friend. Schools must work with students to ensure all travel documents reflect their legal names, while all unofficial documents and materials should reflect the students' preferred names.^{3,4}

Other Participation Considerations

Participation in field trips is not a right and it may be denied to any student who has demonstrated disregard for DCPS or school policies and rules. Students who have been suspended or expelled are not eligible to participate in field trips during the duration of the suspension or expulsion.

Objectives and Evaluation

All DCPS-sponsored field trips must serve the purpose of either providing instruction or enrichment. Instructional trips support the instructional program and should be directly related to the curriculum of

³ Where the purchase of airline tickets is required, a student's ticket must match the name listed on their government-issued identification. For students who have begun or completed the legal name-change process, trip sponsors must work with them to ensure the appropriate identification (i.e., passport for international travel) has been requested with adequate time prior to the trip. For more information about legal name changes, please see [REVISED TRANSGENDER POLICY].

⁴ For travel by air, trip sponsors should also review with student the rights of transgender passengers going through airport security and support the students in advocating for themselves should they require increased privacy during a TSA screening. As of the date of this policy, TSA guidance is available here: <https://www.tsa.gov/transgender-passengers>.

the grade level and/or subject area. To amplify the educational impact of the experiences, such field trips should be scheduled to coincide with the unit or topic they are intended to complement. Enrichment trips contribute to the academic, cultural, or social development of students and deepen their engagement with school and learning but are not necessarily linked to the curriculum (e.g., musical or theatrical performances, or celebratory events). Whenever possible, scheduling enrichment trips during instructional time or the school day should be avoided.

Trip sponsors may allow participants (e.g., students, parents, chaperones) to provide input on the level of field trip effectiveness via survey, as measured by logistics, academic fit, student impact and achievement of stated objectives. Trip sponsors should use this information to determine how to improve or whether to continue planning future field trips of the same nature.

Timing and Length of Trips

Timing

Absent extenuating circumstances approved in advance by an Instructional Superintendent, field trips may not be scheduled at times that coincide with critical academic dates or events which require students’ and teachers’ presence in the classroom, including:

- The last week of any semester, including semester or final exams
- During or immediately preceding applicable scheduled testing windows for statewide assessments, including the DC Comprehensive Assessments of Progress in Education (DC CAPE)/Multi-State Alternative Assessment (MSAA) and DC Science/Science Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)
- Dates that correspond with other testing window opportunities, such as:
 - Advanced Placement Exams (AP)
 - Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs)
 - Dynamic Indicators of Basis Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
 - End-of-Course (EOC) Exams for Algebra I and Biology
 - International Baccalaureate Exams (IB)
 - Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Testing Program (ACT)
 - Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT)

At the start of each academic year, schools are encouraged to provide parents with a schedule of field trips planned for that year with stated objectives. The DCPS school calendar can be found on the DCPS website: <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/dcps-calendars>. Whenever possible, schools should refrain from scheduling field trips on DCPS religious observances, as noted in the DCPS calendar. This includes observances that occur on the weekend.

Length of Field Trips

Field trips scheduled on school days should take place within regular school hours, but in some instances, may extend beyond the school day. For day trips that extend beyond the school day, and overnight trips returning after school hours or on a non-school day, schools are required to ensure that plans are in place for all students to travel home independently or be picked up by a parent/guardian or authorized adult. Each field trip should be designed to accommodate the age and attention span of the students involved. Trip sponsors should adhere to the following guidelines in planning field trips and travel:

Grade Bands	Trip Type: Length of Field Trips		
	Day Trips (Local and Non-Local)	Domestic Overnight Trips	International Trips
Pre-Kindergarten (PK3 – PK4) and Kindergarten (K)	May not exceed the regular school day	Not permitted	Not permitted
Elementary (Grades 1-3)	May exceed regular school day with appropriate planning and approval		
Elementary (Grades 4-5)		May not exceed two (2) days*	
Middle School (Grades 6-8)		May not exceed five (5) days*	May not exceed 14 days*

High School (Grades 9-12) and Opportunity Academies			May not exceed 14 days*
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*For longer trips, schools may request exemption with written justification for Chief of Schools, Global Studies, and Deputy Chancellor to review and decide.

Student Supervision and Chaperone Requirements

There are two types of chaperones: DCPS staff and volunteers (including parent/guardian volunteers, if applicable). Third parties, such as program staff contracted through an educational travel vendor, should never be left alone with students because DCPS cannot guarantee that these individuals are background-checked. Volunteers are not allowed to serve as chaperones on overnight or international field trips. Parent/guardian volunteers may participate in overnight or international field trips as non-chaperone adults, provided all requirements on pages 7 (glossary definition of non-chaperone adult) and 25 are met.

Students participating in field trips must always be supervised by a DCPS employee or volunteer chaperone. **With limited exceptions,⁵ there must be a minimum of two (2) chaperones on every trip.**

At no time shall a student be left without adult supervision during a field trip. The trip sponsor has primary responsibility for ensuring student safety and supervision and must accompany the students on the trip. Schools must provide enough chaperones to ensure adequate supervision for the number and age of students participating. In addition to the required minimum of two (2) chaperones on every trip, the following overall adult-to-student ratio guidelines requirements are:

Grade Band	Minimum Required Chaperone-to-Student Ratio		
	Day (Local and Non-Local)	Domestic Overnight*	International*
Pre-Kindergarten (PK3 – PK4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of two (2) chaperones At least one (1) chaperone for every four (4) students 	<i>Not permitted</i>	<i>Not permitted</i>
Elementary Students (Grades K – 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of two (2) chaperones At least one (1) chaperone for every eight (8) students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of two (2) chaperones At least one (1) chaperone for every six (6) students 	<i>Not permitted</i>
Secondary Students (Grades 6 – 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of two (2) chaperones At least one (1) chaperone for every ten (10) students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of two (2) chaperones At least one (1) chaperone for every six (6) students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of two (2) chaperones. At least one (1) adult for eight (8) students

**Reminder: Volunteers are not allowed to serve as chaperones on overnight and international field trips.*

Schools are strongly encouraged to add at least one (1) additional chaperone if the mode of travel is walking or public transportation. Additional adults required to support an individual student with a disability may not be included when calculating supervision ratios. Museums, tour operators, and other venues may require a lower chaperone to student ratio (i.e., additional adults beyond what is required by DCPS). Trip sponsors must verify this information while planning a trip.

⁵ Limited circumstances may include any trip with four (4) or less students.

Volunteer Chaperone Requirements

All volunteer chaperones must be aged twenty-one (21) or older, or if a parent of a student on a trip, age eighteen (18) or older.

Pursuant to DC Official Code § 4-1501.03, any unsupervised volunteers that have contact with DCPS students must obtain a criminal background check. DCPS assumes that all volunteer chaperones for field trips may be required to have unsupervised contact with students and, therefore, requires all chaperones to submit an online *Volunteer Clearance Application* found on the DCPS website at dcps.dc.gov. Once cleared to volunteer, all chaperones must submit to the trip sponsor a *Volunteer Clearance Letter* and a signed *Chaperone Agreement Form* (Appendix IV).⁶ The principal or trip sponsor must confirm that clearance status of each chaperone through the DCPS Volunteer and Contractor Clearance Dashboard prior to departure.

Chaperone Selection and Responsibilities

Chaperones may be DCPS employees or fully cleared volunteers who are able to perform all chaperone duties and are prepared to support the trip sponsor to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students. The specific duties and responsibilities of chaperones or volunteers must be documented in a *Chaperone Agreement Form* (see Appendix IV) that is distributed by and discussed with the trip sponsor prior to the departure of the trip. The principal or his/her designee should carefully evaluate and approve all chaperones before the start of each field trip. The selection and approval of chaperones may consider the individuals' thorough knowledge of and rapport with the students going on the trip. Caregiver participation in a DCPS-sponsored field trip with their student is not a right and all decisions regarding participation in any capacity are at the discretion of the principal, or principal designee, in consultation with the trip sponsor.

Chaperone responsibilities include supervising students during travel to and from the field trip destination and, for this reason, chaperones may not travel separately to or from the field trip destination. Chaperones may not use alcohol on any trip.

Non-Chaperone Adults Under the Supervision of DCPS Staff

At the discretion of the school principal, parents, guardians, and other primary caregivers may accompany their student on any field trip type under the following limited conditions:

- There are sufficient resources (tickets, space on transportation, etc.) to support the participation of Non-Chaperone Adults;
- Non-Chaperone Adults must be assigned to and supervised by a DCPS staff member;
- Non-Chaperone Adults must never be left alone with any student other than their own child;
- The Non-Chaperone Adult may not be included in the required supervision ratio count; and
- If the Non-Chaperone Adult is accompanying their child for more than one field trip, they must go through the DCPS clearance process.

⁶ The DCPS Clearance Application is completed online and available at dcps.dc.gov/page/volunteer-our-schools.

Transportation

The primary modes of transportation for DCPS-sponsored field trips are walking, public transportation, or DCPS-approved commercial transportation vendors.⁷ Trip sponsors, with support from the principal, business manager, and/or Director/Manager of Strategy and Logistics, are responsible for all transportation arrangements. DCPS staff must use the approved DCPS bus vendor list posted in the Field Trip Quickbase app for all transportation needs. If the public transportation, including Amtrak, is outside of the WMATA system, all relevant procurement rules must be followed to purchase tickets.

The following modes of transportation are strictly **prohibited**:

- Private vehicles operated by DCPS staff;
- Ride-sharing services, e.g. Uber, Lyft, or similar; and
- Parents driving their child or other students in their private vehicle.

Domestic trips may use any of the following means of transportation:

- Walking;
- Public transit systems, e.g., Metrobus, DC Circulator, Metrorail, subways, and buses in destination locations. If the public transportation to be used is Metrobus, DC Circulator, and/or Metrorail within DC, students may use their individual Kids Ride Free (KRF) SmarTrip cards. More details in the [DC Student Ride Guide](#);
- Intercity buses or rail transit systems, e.g., Amtrak, Greyhound, MARC;
 - Ground Transportation Departing from DC and within the destination city may include:
 - All commercial ground transportation must be approved by the DCPS Office of Contracts and Acquisitions (OCA) team pursuant to the DCPS Transportation Policy.
 - Prior to departing on a trip with a commercial transportation vendor, the principal or trip sponsor must request to see the valid and unexpired Commercial Driver's License from each driver on the trip. If any credential is not valid or validity is unclear, the bus may not depart with students and a new driver must be requested. If the vendor cannot send a new driver with valid credentials, the trip must be postponed.
 - In the rare event of availability, travel by an OSSE-operated bus is permitted.
 - Ground Transportation at Destination Locations must be arranged prior to the trip and should be provided by a licensed vendor in the destination(s); or
- Commercial airlines: All international travel, including travel to and from the departure airport and all transportation at international destinations, must be arranged through an educational travel vendor. See International Field Trip Section (pages 31-36) for more information.

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Walking

If a field trip destination is less than two miles from the school location, trip participants are permitted to walk. All elementary (Pre-K through grade 5) field trips traveling by foot are strongly encouraged to include at least one additional chaperone to ensure the safe crossing of streets and intersections. For more information about student supervision see Student Supervision and Chaperone Requirements section (pages 19-20).

Public Transportation

If the school and the field trip destination are both accessible via public transportation, trip participants are permitted to travel via public transportation. All elementary (Pre-K through grade 5) field trips traveling by public transportation are strongly encouraged to include at least one additional chaperone for additional support ensuring that students safely enter and exit the transit system. For more information about student supervision see Student Supervision and Chaperone Requirements section (pages 19-20).

Contracted Commercial Bus Service

Schools are required to use commercial bus transportation vendors approved by the DCPS' Contracts and Acquisitions team.

Prior to departing on a trip with a commercial transportation vendor, the principal or trip sponsor must request to see the valid and unexpired Commercial Driver's License from each driver on the trip. If any credential is not valid or validity is unclear, the bus may not depart with students and a new driver must be requested. Approved bus drivers are all listed by approved bus vendor in the Field Trip QuickBase Application. If the vendor cannot send a new driver with valid credentials, the trip must be postponed.

Duties and Responsibilities

Field trips serve as means for enhancing learning and expanding the range of educational and cultural opportunities available to DCPS students.⁸ Principals and trip sponsors planning field trips and student travel must ensure that these experiences serve legitimate educational purposes; are conducted in a manner consistent with sound educational practices; always ensure the safety and well-being of participating students; and are evaluated periodically to determine their effectiveness in fulfilling their specified purposes.⁹ Field trips designed to educate or modify behavior through intimidation of students are prohibited.¹⁰

The following section outlines the roles and responsibilities of all field trip stakeholders including the trip sponsor, the principal, participating students, and the parents of those students. All field trip stakeholders including the trip sponsor, the principal, participating students, the parents of those students, and chaperones are expected to fulfill the roles and responsibilities outlined in the Field Trip and Student Travel Implementation Protocol.

Trip Sponsor

The trip sponsor oversees planning and coordinating a field trip. A trip sponsor can be a school-based staff member or a member of a Central Services, e.g., a member of the DCPS Global Education Team for Study Abroad trips. The responsibilities of the trip sponsor include:

Preparing for the Field Trip

1. Submitting all required information into the Field Trip QuickBase application according to specified timelines.
2. Securing initial approval from the principal and if applicable, DCPS Office of Risk Management.
3. Developing a detailed itinerary, including the destination, departure date/time, travel schedule, and return date/time.
4. Making arrangements in advance with the site(s) to be visited.
5. Arranging for the required number of chaperones to accompany the group, including a trained school employee to administer medication, if necessary.
6. Providing the following information to parents/guardians or adult students:
 - a. Detailed itinerary;
 - b. Purpose of the trip, including a description of activities in which students will be engaged during the trip;
 - c. Cost per student, if applicable, and whether those costs cover any DCPS staff members;
 - d. Type of transportation and name of carrier(s);
 - e. Description and address of hotel accommodations for any overnight and international trips;
 - f. Description and address of homestay accommodations for international trips, if applicable;
 - g. Information on the DCPS *Safe and Positive Schools Policy*¹¹ (see also Title 5, Chapter B25 of DCMR), which explain the rules of student discipline and prohibited behaviors;

⁸ 5-B DCMR § 2306.1(a).

⁹ 5-B DCMR § 2306.1(b).

¹⁰ 5-B DCMR § 2306.2.

¹¹ Available at <https://dcps.dc.gov/publication/safe-and-positive-schools-policy>.

- h. Any trip-specific code of conduct expectations, if applicable;
 - i. Names and phone numbers of chaperones in case of emergency; and
 - j. Notification to parent/guardian of opportunity to participate in the trip as a chaperone or Non-Chaperone Adult, when applicable.
7. Obtaining all required forms, including permission slips and medication and treatment authorization forms for each medication, complete and signed by the parent/guardian of each participating student or each participating adult student; **Written translations of permission forms and other key documents must be provided to the parents and guardians of language-minority students in their home language.**¹²
8. Working with business manager or Director/Manager of Strategy and Logistics to use the P-Card for transportation services and/or enter RK(s), if using DCPS funds.
9. Collecting money for any required fares and admission fees, if not using DCPS funds.
10. Obtaining complete insurance information for lodging and commercial carriers, when appropriate.
11. Submitting provisions for students who will not be participating, including class coverage and assigned work to principal.
12. The trip sponsor should communicate in writing with the school nurse at least three (3) weeks in advance of the field trip to identify the students in need of medication administration during the trip.

During the Field Trip

1. Ensure chaperones provide active supervision of all students at all times.
2. Carrying a complete hard copy student roster including emergency contact information and detailed itinerary.
3. Carrying copies of completed *Field Trip Permission Forms* (Appendix IV) and medication administration forms, if medical treatment of a student is required and a parent/guardian is unavailable to approve such treatment.
4. Ensuring that each student is carrying proper identification in the event he or she is separated from the group.
5. Remaining with student(s) until each student has been picked up by a parent/guardian or responsible party unless prior alternate arrangements have been made.

If, for any reason, the trip sponsor is unable to comply with the responsibilities in this section or is unable to ensure full compliance with this policy, they should immediately contact the school's principal for guidance.

Business Manager

1. Confirm trip sponsor's trip cost entries and funding sources
2. Identify vendors and process payment options
3. Process related documentation for in-kind donations (\leq \$500), if applicable
4. Approve total trip costs within the Field Trip QuickBase application for field trip requests

¹² See Language Access Policy, available here: <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/dcps-policies>.

Principal

The principal role refers to the principal of the school that the field trip participants attend. Principals can only approve trips for their students. If a trip includes students from different schools, each school must enter their trip individually. The responsibilities of the principal include:

Preparing for the Field Trip

1. Reviewing and fully approving, prior to departure, all trip related details and appropriate forms submitted by the trip sponsor via Quickbase and collected via hard copy.
2. Providing the trip sponsor with a phone number to use in the event of an emergency.
3. Overseeing the trip sponsor in ensuring that all chaperones have been fingerprinted and have received a DCPS volunteer clearance.
4. Assigning a trained school employee to administer medication for the duration of the field trip, if applicable.

During the Field Trip

1. In the event of an emergency, notifying parents, the Instructional Superintendent, the Chief of Schools, the jurisdictional law enforcement agency, and the Office of School Security, as appropriate.
2. If there is an incident during a field trip, the school must enter an Incident Report and follow DCPS Incident Reporting Tool (IRT) protocol.

Parent

The parent role refers to the parent or legal guardian of a student participating in the field trip or the student if the student is over the age of 18. The responsibilities of the parent/adult student include:

1. Completing and signing appropriate forms for each participating student;
2. Providing accurate and complete health information for their child, including information on required medications and any medical or physical conditions which may affect their child's ability to participate in the travel experience safely;
3. Acknowledging that rights to any non-refundable payments or deposits paid to private providers may be forfeited as the result of a student's illness or behavior that would disqualify the student from participation; and
4. Providing a complete and valid Medication and Treatment Authorization Forms specific to the duration of the field trip for each medication prescribed for the student, along with medication sufficient for the duration of the field trip. These should be delivered to the school nurse or the trained school Employee no later than three (3) days prior to the field trip. For overnight field trips, the school supply of medication should only be utilized if the family has no other means to provide an additional supply (too soon to refill, etc.).

Student

All DCPS polices and regulations, including behavior and discipline rules, apply when students are participating in field trips, including traveling to and from field trip destinations.¹³ The responsibilities of the student include:

1. Traveling to and from the field trip site(s) with the school group: Students may not travel independently to or from a field trip site unless permission is requested by the parent, in writing and approved by the principal before departure.

¹³ See 5-B DCMR § 2501.1.

2. Staying with the group while on the field trip: Students must remain with the group, in alignment with the field trip itinerary, for the duration of the trip.
3. Exhibiting appropriate behavior: Students who are approved to participate in any field trip, who are suspended or expelled prior to departure, are ineligible to participate in the field trip during their suspension or expulsion.
4. Acknowledging the rules listed DC law and regulations and DCPS policy that prohibits the sale, distribution, possession, or use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana¹⁴, controlled dangerous substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, controlled or drug paraphernalia, unauthorized over-the-counter medication, and unauthorized prescription drugs.

Instructional Superintendent/Chief/Deputy Chancellor

Reviewing and providing final approval based on trip type and confirming that all the expected trip related details and forms have been submitted via the Field Trip QuickBase app prior to departure.

¹⁴ Students prescribed medical marijuana may be exempted from this provision pursuant to D.C. Code § 7-1671.03(b)).

Protocol for Emergencies and Unexpected Circumstances

In the event of an emergency which places students' health and/or safety at risk (e.g., an accident involving students, missing students, equipment failure), the accompanying trip sponsor/chaperone should immediately address the needs of the students to ensure their well-being and notify the principal, who will contact parents, the Instructional Superintendent, Chief of Schools, the jurisdictional law enforcement agency and the Office of School Security as appropriate. The Chief of Schools will notify the Deputy Chancellor and Chancellor as appropriate.

In the event of an emergency during travel or a change to the travel itinerary, the trip sponsor and/or chaperone will notify the principal and follow the protocol listed above.

For any trip during which an emergency or incident occurred during travel, the trip sponsor should write an incident report, including the date, time, location, and detailed description of the incident, including person(s) involved and response(s) and action(s) taken. The trip sponsor must submit the incident report to appropriate Central Services staff and to the principal immediately after addressing the needs of student(s) involved to ensure their well-being, or within 24 hours of the incident. At least one witness should also write and submit an incident support, to accompany the trip sponsor's report, as immediately as possible or within 24 hours of the incident.

If for any reason – including behavior that violates DC law and regulations or DCPS policy on student discipline or other discipline guidance approved by DCPS Central Services (e.g., the DCPS Study Abroad Student Code of Conduct), illness, or a personal emergency – a student must return home, the student's parent/guardian must be notified in advance and should agree to meet the student at a designated pickup location. If the parent/guardian is unreachable, the student's principal or appropriate school-based point of contact must be notified and should meet the student at a designated pickup location. If transportation to the designated pickup location includes air travel, students under the age of 16 must be accompanied on their flight by a chaperone who has been background checked by DCPS. Students over the age of 16 may fly unaccompanied, though a chaperone background checked by DCPS must accompany the student to the airport and ensure the student checks in successfully for their flight. Any costs associated with an emergency return will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Domestic Overnight Trips

Additional Requirements for Domestic Overnight Trips

Domestic Overnight Trips: In addition to the above requirements, the following additional requirements apply to all field trips and student travel that includes an overnight stay:

1. **Lodging Requirements:** hotels and campgrounds are the only permitted overnight accommodations. All other domestic lodging types (ex. Private homes, Airbnb, hostels), are not permitted.
2. **Rooming Requirements:**
 - a. Occupancy may not exceed one per bed
 - b. Parents may have the choice to pay for single occupancy room if available
 - c. Only students of the same gender may be assigned to a room. The trip sponsor should ensure that transgender and gender expanding students are accommodated.

Additional Chaperone Requirements and Responsibilities During Overnight Trips

- Chaperones will not stay overnight in rooms with students.
- Chaperones must conduct at least one routine room check per night to ensure that students have no prohibited items that indicate the sale, distribution, possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, controlled dangerous substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, controlled or drug paraphernalia, unauthorized over-the-counter medication, and unauthorized prescription drugs. Students found to be in violation will be subject to applicable disciplinary actions and may also be subject to criminal prosecution. **Chaperones must complete the room check in pairs.**
- A routine room check should include a cursory check of the room including the bathroom. Chaperones should not search students' luggage or personal items. All students assigned to the room must be present at the time of the room check. If a chaperone observes the presence of prohibited substances in the room or observes activity that is suspicious or that indicates possible drug/alcohol use or intoxication, the chaperone should immediately inform the trip sponsor.

International Field Trips

Additional Requirements for International Trips

International field trips include trips where the destination is outside of the United States. International field trips are exclusively for students in grades 6-12. Due to the additional risks associated with International Trips, DCPS may ask the trip sponsor to provide additional information and/or copies of additional documentation at any time.

All international travel must be organized through an educational travel company. Exceptions to this requirement may be approved on a limited basis by the Deputy Chancellor.¹⁵

International Safety Considerations and Prohibited Destinations

International trip sponsors are required to review the U.S. Department of State website at <https://travel.state.gov> for any current travel warnings or public announcements for countries that may pose a travel risk prior to beginning planning or requesting pre-approval for an international trip.

Planning travel to any country with a U.S. Department of State Advisory Level of 3 or 4 is prohibited. Trip sponsors must continue to monitor U.S. Department of State travel advisories and health and safety conditions in the destination country throughout the planning stages and up to and through trip departure.

Travel to a country which rises to Advisory Level 3 **after pre-approval** will be considered on a case-by-case basis with final approval by the Deputy Chancellor or Chancellor. Additional requirements include:

1. Consult with the educational travel company;
2. Consult with the school principal;
3. Communicate the threat level to students and parents;
4. Consider canceling or rescheduling the trip;
5. Consider modifying the trip itinerary to reduce risk based on the U.S. Department of State advisory.

All international trip sponsors and chaperones are required to enroll in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) through <https://step.state.gov>. STEP is a free service offered that provides important information Embassies about safety conditions in a traveler's destination country; helps the U.S. Embassy contact international travelers in an emergency, including natural disasters, civil unrest, or family emergency; and helps family and friends get in touch during an international travel emergency.

Trip sponsors are required to notify parents of the risk level of the destination country and encourage them to enroll in the STEP program. Schools can reach out to the DCPS Communications Team for support with messaging.

¹⁵ Limited exceptions may include, but are not limited to, travel sponsored by an embassy, education organization, industry partner, educational exchange program, or conferences with sponsored lodging arrangements.

Travel Arrangements

All international trips must be organized through educational travel contractor(s) that can tailor their programming to meet the unique needs of DCPS and whose staff has the professionalism, experience, expertise, and cultural competency necessary for creating positive global travel learning experiences for diverse groups of student travelers. These educational travel contractors must be physically located in the contiguous United States or on a U.S. territory (American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). Final itemized itineraries for all tours, which outline details and times for all daily activities and potential alternative activities on tour are required to be uploaded in the Field Trip QuickBase App and must be included before final approval can be given.

Educational travel contractors must:

- Provide detailed daily itineraries including:
 - An overview of tour activities
 - Practical alternative activities for each tour
 - Lodging details for each night
 - A summary of all potential high-risk activities including safety provisions for each activity

- Provide a price breakdown including:
 - Roundtrip airfare from Washington, DC
 - Baggage fees
 - Cost of three meals per day (including travel days) for all travelers
 - Access to clean drinking water every day for all travelers on tour
 - Snacks for all travelers on tour every day
 - Travel insurance
 - Accommodations
 - Entrance/activity fees for tours, including tipping
 - Miscellaneous items
 - All transportation in the destination city including transportation for tours
 - Medical co-pays and related expenses for healthcare
 - Immunizations and other precautionary health screenings if applicable

All educational travel contractors must meet or provide the following minimum requirements:

Trip Protection Insurance	Contractors are required to provide trip protection insurance with options that include trip modifications and cancellation coverage.
Travel Insurance	Contractors are required to provide travel insurance, which includes access to healthcare, emergency repatriation, and emergency family reunification for each traveler on the tour. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/7 travel assistance • Terrorism Relief - \$25,000 per traveler • Emergency Trip Delay / Interruption / Cancellation - \$5,000 per traveler • Theft of belongings/passports/travel documents - \$1,000 per traveler

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidnap & Ransom – should be insured or have a signed waiver / hold harmless in place • Crime/theft – as determined appropriate • Medical Coverage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Per injury/illness medical coverage - \$250,000 per traveler; not exceeding \$50.00 per traveler B) Dental Sudden Relief Coverage - \$1,000 maximum per traveler <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Transportation/Evacuation a) Political Transportation - \$10,000 per traveler b) Emergency Medical Evacuation - \$100,00 per traveler c) Ambulance - \$1,000 per incident, per traveler
Emergency Medical Costs	Contractors are required to pay upfront medical costs on behalf of travelers up to \$25,000.00 per traveler per occurrence and can seek reimbursement from DCPS for on-tour medical expenses.
Contractor Insurance Requirements	<p>Contractors are required to provide proof of the following types and amounts of insurance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commercial General Liability -\$1,000,000 per occurrence /\$2,000,000 aggregate 2. Automobile Liability -\$1,000,000 3. Workers' Compensation/Employer Liability – meet statutory requirements 4. Cyber Liability - \$2,000,000 per occurrence / \$2,000,000 aggregate 5. Professional Liability - \$1,000,000 per occurrence /\$2,000,000 aggregate <p>Sexual/Physical Abuse & Molestation – \$1,000,000 per occurrence / \$2,000.000 aggregate</p> <p>Commercial Umbrella or Excess Liability -5,000,000 per occurrence / \$5,000,000 aggregate (all liability coverages scheduled under this policy)</p> <p>The Government of the District of Columbia should be listed as an Additional Insured and the Certificate Holder. The policies should also contain a Waiver of Subrogation provision in favor of the Government of the District of Columbia.</p>
Criminal Background Checks	Criminal Background Check: Vendors must conduct a local and national criminal background check, including fingerprinting in accordance with FBI policies and procedures, and drug & alcohol testing.

Homestay Programs

DCPS is committed to preparing students as global citizens and provides access to immersive global experiences that align with content and enrich students' academic experiences in the classroom. Certain international trips allow DCPS students to reside with host families in the country visited for all or part of the trip. **All homestays must be coordinated through an educational travel vendor.** This section details the policies to ensure that homestays are conducted in a safe and secure manner.

For international field trip proposals that include homestays for all or part of the trip, following conditions apply:

- A minimum of two DCPS students of the same gender should be placed with each family; the trip should accommodate each student's expressed gender identity, if possible;
- DCPS students may not share a bed with each other or a member of the homestay household;
- All homestay sites must be within 20 minutes' travel time of the DCPS trip sponsor's accommodations;
- Travel in the host family vehicle is prohibited, and students must take public transportation or privately contracted transportation when traveling with host families;
- All student housing accommodations must comply with the laws of the host country, including but not limited to laws pertaining to health, safety and security;
- The host family's home must be reasonably secure, with a lock or similar security device protecting all external entrances;
- All student housing accommodations should provide the following furniture for each individual student in an individual room (or shared with 1 other minor child between 5 and 17 years old): bed, lamp, and storage space;
- Students should have the right to reasonable privacy, including ability either to lock their room or access to a lockable storage space;
- All student housing accommodations should provide access to and use of all common areas, including any bathrooms, kitchens, living space. If any of these areas are to be restricted, this information should be made available to the students prior to placement;
- A list of house rules should be clearly posted in students' individual rooms and/or common areas;
- All student housing accommodations must be physically inspected and evaluated, considering the overall environment, security, safety of the accommodation, and location by educational travel agency or the trip sponsor, if possible;
- Accessible student housing accommodations should be provided for students with disabilities;
- No other guests will be a resident in the student housing accommodations other than Program/Provider students;
- An emergency evacuation plan should be shared with students;
- Local emergency contacts (e.g., police, fire, ambulance, DCPS chaperones, homestay family members) should be posted in a visible location for the student;
- All student housing accommodations should be inspected for fire safety, including the appropriate number of fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and carbon monoxide detectors. Instructions on what to do in case of fire will be clearly explained to students and/or posted in students' individual rooms
- Where meals are provided, all student housing accommodations will be inspected with regard to food safety;

- In earthquake zones, clear instructions on what to do in case of earthquake will be clearly explained to students and/or posted in students' rooms; and
- Every individual over the age of 18 living in the student housing accommodations will undergo a background check and/or at least two references from members of the community in good standing will be obtained and checked.

Educational travel vendors are responsible for completing all homestay required forms. They should collaborate and update trip sponsors and a representative of DCPS Global Education team with homestay details. A *Homestay Safety Research Form* (Appendix IV), which will be reviewed as part of Phase 1 approval.

Once the trip has been approved, the trip sponsor must secure housing for all participating students and chaperones. The educational travel agency should share as much information as possible about the host families. After gathering this information, the trip sponsor should match students and host families based on each student's individual needs and preferences. Special consideration should be given to students with accessibility needs, medication authorization and treatment plans, and other sensitive situations.

The *Homestay Host Family Information Form* (Appendix IV) must be completed for each student's host family including all required information and uploaded in the Field Trip QuickBase app. A parent/guardian for each participating student must return a signed form to the trip sponsor for their child to participate in the field trip. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are also required to sign the *Field Trip Permission Form* (Appendix IV) used for all international field trips.

At least three months prior to departure, the trip sponsor and/or other trip coordinators are highly encouraged to host a parent/guardian orientation reviewing all aspects of the trip, including the homestay component. DCPS must explain that DCPS is unable to conduct official background checks on host families and relies on information collected by the trip sponsor or other outside parties. DCPS should make clear that it has not independently verified the information, chaperones will not be supervising the students while they are with the host families, and that participation in the trip is voluntary. The trip sponsor must provide each family with action plans regarding the following:

- Nightly check-in times with a chaperone;
- How to communicate with a chaperone in the event of an emergency or sensitive need; and
- Transportation information relating to travel to and from field trip activities and host family's residence.

If an orientation cannot be held, the trip sponsor must share with the parents/guardians the pertinent information mentioned above via email or in writing.

Once the DCPS group arrives in the host country, the trip sponsors and/or chaperones must ensure that all students connect with their host families. While travel with the host family is permitted via public or privately contracted transportation, students should not travel outside the destination city with the host family. Travel within the destination city includes commuting to and from locations with approved activities, as well as the neighborhood surrounding the host family's residence, where the student will be staying while in the country. Travel to all official field trip activities should be as a group under the supervision of a chaperone.

In the event a student reports an uncomfortable or unsafe interaction with a host family, that student should be immediately removed from that family and placed with a new host family. The student's

family should immediately be notified and provided with the new host family's contact information. Travel vendors must provide evidence that they are able to accommodate this situation.

Appendices

Appendix I: Domestic Trip Approval Procedures

The following section outlines domestic trip roles and responsibilities of all field trip stakeholders including the trip sponsor, the principal, participating students, and the parents of those students. The Office of Risk Management is an added approval level for overnight or domestic field trips over 50 miles if the school indicates an elevated risk activity is part of the trip.

- **Phase 1 Approval (Initial Approval):** Trip sponsors submit initial forms including the trip itinerary, other background information, total cost, and funding sources. After Phase 1 approval the trip sponsor can start making trip arrangements with business managers, parents, chaperones, and Central Services staff, as appropriate.
 - For domestic overnight or trips over 50 miles, initial approval must be received from the principal, and Office of Risk Management and/or procurement if applicable.
- **Phase 2 Approval (Final Approval):** Trip sponsors submit all supporting documentation related to the trip (e.g., permission forms, chaperone volunteer clearance letters, student roster, etc.), inform parents and chaperones of the trip expectations, and book all arrangements, following procurement procedures, before the trip departure. Phase 2 approval means the trip is cleared for departure.
 - Any changes to an approved itinerary must be forwarded to the principal for approval in advance. The principal is the final approver for day and local trips.

Day and Local Trips (<50 Miles)

For local trips (less than 50 miles from Central Office) and day trips, the trip sponsor must complete the Domestic Field Trip Application (Appendix I) and submit it to their principal for Phase 1 approval. The Domestic Field Trip Application must be submitted no later than **60** days prior to departure. Once Phase 1 approval is obtained, the trip sponsor completes the following forms and submits them for principal's approval as part of Phase 2 approval no later than **10** days prior to departure:

- *Actual Field Trip Costs Form*
- *Student Roster Form*
- *Field Trip Permission Forms:* These are not required to be uploaded on the Field Trip QuickBase Application for domestic trips less than 50 miles but encouraged.
 - Domestic field trips less than 50 miles' permission slips must be kept on file at the school's office for two years.
- *Chaperone Roster Form*
- *Chaperone Agreement Forms*
- *Volunteer Clearance Letters* – this letter is generated by HR once volunteer receives clearance
- *Charter Bus Insurance Form*

Overnight Trips or Non-Local Day Trips (>50 Miles)

For non-local trips (more than 50 miles from DCPS Central Office) or overnight trips, the trip sponsor must complete the *Domestic Field Trip Application* (Appendix I) and submit it first to the principal for Phase 1 approval no later than **60 days** prior to departure. The principal-signed *Domestic Field Trip Application* must be submitted online to the Instructional Superintendent no later than **80 days** prior to departure. Any changes to an approved itinerary must be sent to the principal and Instructional

Superintendent for approval in advance. The Instructional Superintendent is the final approver for overnight and non-local day trips.

Once Phase 1 approval is obtained, the trip sponsor completes the additional forms and submits them for principal's approval as part of Phase 2 approval no later than **10 days** prior to departure. These forms are kept at the school level:

- *Volunteer Clearance Letters* – this letter is generated by HR once volunteer receives clearance
- Charter Bus Insurance Form
- Hotel Reservation
- Hotel Insurance Form

The trip sponsor should complete the following forms, found in Appendix IV, and submit them for instructional superintendent's approval:

- *Actual Field Trip Costs Form*
- *Student Roster Form*
- *Chaperone Roster Form*
- *Field Trip Permission Forms*
- *Student Agreement Form*
- *Chaperone Agreements Forms*

Trip sponsors are not permitted to take students on field trips without a complete packet of all required forms and documents. Trip sponsors are encouraged to refer to the guidance documents as they engage in the field trip planning. No travel will begin without documented approval.

Appendix II: International Trip Approval Procedures

The following section outlines the roles and responsibilities of all field trip stakeholders including the trip sponsor, the principal, participating students, and the parents of those students. Any changes to an approved itinerary must be sent to the principal, Instructional Superintendent, and Chief of Schools for approval in advance. The Deputy Chancellor is the final approver for international trips. The Office of Risk Management is an added approval level for international field trips if the school indicates an elevated risk activity is part of the trip.

- **Phase 1 Approval (Initial Approval):** Requires trip sponsors to submit initial forms including on the trip itinerary, other background information, total cost, and funding sources. After Phase 1 approval the trip sponsor can start making trip arrangements with business managers, parents, chaperones, and Central Services staff as appropriate.
 - Initial approvals must be received from the principal and Instructional Superintendent, and Office of Risk Management and/or procurement if applicable.
- **Phase 2 Approval (Final Approval):** Requires trip sponsors to submit all supporting documentation related to the trip (e.g., permission forms, chaperone volunteer clearance letters, student roster, passports, etc.), inform parents and chaperones of trip expectations, and book all arrangements, following procurement guidelines before the trip departure. Phase 2 approval means the trip is cleared for departure.

Below are the four approval windows with updated submission timelines for each school year.

Submission Requirement	Window 1 Travel from October 1 - December 31	Window 2 Travel from January 1- February 29	Window 3 Travel from March 1 – May 1	Window 4 Travel from May 1 – September 30
Deadline to Submit Initial Approval to Instructional Superintendent (requires principal approval) including detailed trip itinerary	April 1	July 1	September 1	November 1
Deadline for Instructional Superintendent Initial Review and Approval	May 1	August 1	October 1	December 1
Trip Sponsor Plans Trip and Collects Permission Slips and required forms	May/June/July	August/ September/ October	October/ November/ December	December/ January/ February
Submit Final Request to Instructional Superintendent	August 1	November 1	January 1	March 1

Once Phase 1 approval is obtained from principal and Instructional Superintendent, the trip sponsor completes the additional forms and submits them for Chief of Schools and Deputy Chancellor’s approvals as part of Phase 2 approval.

- *Actual Field Trip Costs Form*
- *Student Roster Form*

- *Field Trip Permission Forms*
- *Student Agreement Forms*
- *Chaperone Roster Form*
- *Chaperone Agreement Forms*
- *Volunteer Clearance Letters* – this letter is generated by HR once volunteer receives clearance
- *Homestay Host Family Information Form*, if applicable
- *Completed Itinerary*
- *Copies of Passports & Visas*

Trip sponsors will not be permitted to take students on field trips without a complete packet of all required forms and documents. Trip sponsors are encouraged to refer to the guidance documents as they engage in the field trip planning. No travel will begin without documented approval.

Appendix III: Administration of Medication

The following is DCPS' policy regarding the administration of medication for students participating in field trips off school grounds. Please refer to these guidelines for clarification on the role of school-based staff and parents and caregivers.

Students under the care of a licensed health care provider and who have a *Medication Plan* (Medication and Treatment Authorization Form, Asthma Action Plan, Anaphylaxis Action Plan, Seizure Action Plan, etc.) written by a licensed health care provider are eligible to have their medication administered while on field trips only when absolutely necessary.

Role of Parents/Caregivers

- If possible, medications should be administered by parents/caregivers before or after school.
- A student's parent/caregiver may attend the field trip and administer the medication.
- For daily medication to be administered on an overnight or international field trip, where the parent/caregiver is not participating in the trip, the following will be required:
 - A valid and completed Medication Plan for each medication prescribed for the student.
 - Medication sufficient for the duration of the field trip.
 - The Medication Plan and medication must be received by the school nurse or the Trained School Employee no less than 3 days prior to the start of the field trip.

Role of Principals/Teachers/Nurses

- Trip sponsors are to notify the principal of the health needs of all children attending a field trip, including students required medication during the trip, as a part of the field trip approval process.
- If the parent/caregiver of any student requiring medication during the trip cannot participate in the field trip and the student is not authorized to self-administer, the principal will designate a school staff member who has completed the DC Health Administration of Medication (AOM) training and has an active certificate on file.
- The trip sponsor should communicate with the school nurse at least three (3) weeks in advance of the field trip to identify the students in need of medication administration during the trip.
- If the field trip is an overnight field trip, the school nurse will communicate with the parent/caregiver to provide them with sufficient time to obtain the required Medication Plan and medication.
- The principal will provide a secure method for the Trained School Employee to store medication for the duration of the field trip.

Role of Trained School Employees During Day Field Trips

- In the event of an emergency, the Trained School Employee will adhere to DCPS policy by calling for emergency assistance.
- Only medication (daily and 'as needed') for which Medication Plan that is active and fully completed will be administered while on the field trip.
- The Trained School Employee will meet with the school nurse after school is out on the day before the field trip and arrange to sign out a single dose of medication/the Metered Dose Inhaler (MDI) and spacer/the Epinephrine Auto-injector for availability on the field trip the next day. This will be entered into the student's Medication Record in the 'Remarks' column as

“Dose/MDI/Epinephrine Auto-injector removed for availability on field trip” and signed by the Trained School Employee.

- The Trained School Employee should place the dose of medication in an empty vial labeled with the student’s name and date of birth, as well as the name and strength of the medication and the time at which it is to be administered. MDIs and Epinephrine Auto-injectors can be stored in small brown paper bags labeled with the student’s name and date of birth.
- Upon return to the school, the Trained School Employee will go to the Health Suite, return the vial/MDI/Epinephrine Auto-injector to the nurse and document any administration of medication during the field trip as a ‘late entry’ on the student’s Medication Record.

Role of Trained School Employees During Overnight Field Trips

- In the event of an emergency, the Trained School Employee will adhere to DCPS policy by calling for emergency assistance.

Daily Medication

- If the parent/caregiver chooses not to participate in the field trip, they are responsible for completing and submitting a Medication Plan for each medication allowing the Trained School Employee to administer all daily doses of medication. The parent must supply medication sufficient for the duration of the field trip.
- The Trained School Employee should keep a copy of the Medication Plan, the Medication Record specific to the Medication Plan, and the medication itself in a secure place.
- The Trained School Employee will administer the medication as authorized and document each administration on the Medication Record.
- Upon return from the field trip, the Trained School Employee will compile all the documentation and deliver it to the school nurse for inclusion in the student’s Health Record.
- Upon return from the field trip, the Trained School Employee will return any unused portion of medication to the parent/caregiver.

‘As Needed’ (PRN) Medication

- The Trained School Employee will obtain from the school nurse a copy of the Medication Plan on file in the Health Suite.
- The Trained School Employee will obtain a blank Medication Record for documenting medication administration during the field trip.
- The Trained School Employee will receive the medication from the parent at least three (3) days prior to the field trip.
- The Trained School Employee will administer the medication as needed during the field trip and document on the Medication Record.
- Upon return from the field trip, the Trained School Employee will return the medication to the parent/caregiver **and** deliver the documentation to the school nurse for inclusion in the student’s Health Record.

Appendix IV: Additional Field Trip Forms

The following forms are also used to plan and manage DCPS field trips:

- Actual Field Trip Costs Form
- Student Roster Form
- Field Trip Permission Form
- Student Agreement Form
- Chaperone Agreement Form
- Field Trip Cafeteria Notification Form
- Homestay Safety Research Form
- Homestay Host Family Information Form
- Non-DCPS Sponsored Field Trip Notification Form
- Medication Treatment and Authorization Forms, Asthma Action Plans, Seizure Action Plans, available at <https://dchealth.dc.gov/service/school-health-services-program>.