

# Hamilton County Board of Education

Monitoring: <b>Review: Annually, in November</b>	Descriptor Term: <b>Field Trips and Excursions</b>	Descriptor Code: <b>4.301</b>	Issued Date: <b>5/19/16</b>
		Rescinds:	Issued:

## SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

Field trips designed to stimulate interest and inquiry and to provide opportunities for social growth and development are considered appropriate extensions of the classroom.

To be educationally beneficial, a field trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class, and opportunities for students to summarize the experience at the conclusion of the trip. To this end, teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in selecting field trips:

1. Value of the activity to the particular class group or groups;
2. Relationship of the field trip activity to a particular aspect of classroom instruction;
3. Suitability of the activity and distance traveled in terms of the age level;
4. Mode and availability of transportation; and
5. Cost. School officials are reminded that they may not require the payment of any fee as a condition of any student attending any field trip that occurs during any portion of the regular school day or that is offered in connection with a class offered for credit even if the trip is voluntary.

The following guidelines shall be followed in planning and conducting academic field trips:

1. Any teacher desiring to take a group of students on a school field trip must obtain advance approval of the principal and the director of schools. All overnight activities require Board approval;
2. The trip must have a definite purpose and reflect careful planning. Students should be prepared by general class discussion and/or research;
3. If bus transportation is required, the principal or his/her designee shall make the necessary arrangements. All outside carriers must be on the approved carrier list.
4. Signed parental permission forms must be obtained for every student making an off-campus trip beyond the immediate vicinity of the school. The principal shall ensure that these forms are kept on file for the remainder of the school year. The form for parental permission must include: purpose, date, time of departure and return, travel plans, destination, number of chaperones, personal expense involved, and other facts necessary for parents to be fully informed. This information is to be completed by the school before the form is signed by the parent. *The Hamilton County Code of Acceptable Behavior* and all board policies shall be applicable to school field trips;

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5. For school field trips (day and overnight), groups must be accompanied by at least one certified employee. The chaperones shall be responsible for student conduct for the duration of the trip. Only certified employees can be chaperones on overnight field trips. For day trips that do not extend beyond the school day, classified employees may be included as chaperones.
6. For overnight school trips, chaperones must be approved by the principal and the director of schools in advance. There must be at least one female and one male chaperone if the trip is for a mixed group.
7. Students shall not be penalized for participating in approved school-sponsored trips and activities. Teachers shall permit students to make up class assignments missed because of a trip or activity;
8. All accidents that occur on a school-sponsored trip must be reported by the teacher to the principal immediately. Serious accidents involving personal injury must be reported immediately to the principal and/or director of schools. An emergency shall be dealt with promptly by the teacher or other members of the school staff by taking appropriate action, including sending the student to the hospital or summoning medical aid or ambulance. In cases where it is necessary to send the student to the hospital, reasonable effort must be made to notify the parents;
9. Any school-sponsored trip not meeting the “educationally beneficial” criteria as defined in this section must have prior approval of the director of schools or his/her designee;

## **SPECIAL RULES FOR ATHLETIC AND BAND TRIPS**

1. Except as otherwise set forth in this section, the same policies governing school field trips shall govern athletic and band trips.
2. Athletic and band trips that do not extend beyond the school day must be approved by the principal and the director for the schools. In addition to the previous approvals, overnight athletic and band trips must also be approved by the Hamilton County School Board. The Board of Education recognizes, however, that in some unusual situations, school officials will not be able to secure advance approval of the Board for these trips. The Board cautions school officials, however, to be especially diligent to adhere to the terms of Board policy in those situations in which the trip must occur prior to the Board’s approval.

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3. There should be at least one chaperone to every fifteen students on athletic and band overnight trips. Parent volunteers may serve as chaperones on athletic and band overnight trips; provided, however, that these volunteers must first submit to a background check; and further provided that the trip organizer shall be responsible for familiarizing these volunteers with the Hamilton County Code of Acceptable Behavior and other provisions of Board policy applicable to supervision of students.

**TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS NOT SANCTIONED BY THE SCHOOL**

The Board of Education does not sanction any field trip or other excursion outside the scope of this policy and disclaims any legal and financial responsibilities for any such trips. Any employee who organizes any such privately planned trip, whether on his or her own initiative or as an agent or independent contractor for another entity, is solely responsible for the trip and his or her actions.

The Board of Education cautions any employee organizing a privately planned trip regarding an educator’s professional duties toward the students of the Hamilton County Schools, including the obligation not to use relationships with students for personal financial gain. Furthermore, the Board reminds any such employee of the obligation to adhere to the highest professional standards when interacting with students, even when doing so on any privately planned trip. The Board will discipline any employee who breaches his or her professional duties toward any student even when on a privately planned trip.

No employee may recruit students to participate in any privately planned trip except to the extent that the school also permits third party vendors to recruit students for such trips. Under no circumstances may an employee recruit students during class time or other portions of the regular school day.