

Administrative Procedures for Field Trips
(Attachment for Policy No.121)

Purpose

The safety of District students, staff, and parents/chaperones during field trips is paramount. The purpose of this administrative procedure is to support all schools in planning field trips that are safe, equitable, educationally meaningful, and compliant with Board Policy and District requirements.

Note

A new field trip submission and approval system is being rolled out in phases to specific Learning Networks. Schools not yet notified of their participation in the roll-out will continue using existing approval processes while adhering to these Administrative Procedures.

Definitions

Parent/Guardian: Anyone legally responsible for a student.

Chaperone: A School District employee, or an adult volunteer, who supervises students on a field trip.

Field Trip: Any school-approved trip away from the school.

School-Sponsored Trip: Any activity, event or travel experience, tied to learning or academic goals (e.g. college visits), that occurs at a location other than the school building(s) or school property and is initiated, organized, approved, supervised, or otherwise facilitated by the school or District, regardless of the funding source.

Athletic Trips: Managed by the Athletics Office; requires coach presence and annual forms.

Non-School-Sponsored Trips: Any activity or travel experience outside of school hours that is not initiated, organized, approved, supervised or facilitated by the school or School District. District forms, letterhead, logos, or official communications may not be used, and the activity may not be represented as school or District-endorsed.

Procedures

General Requirements & Timing

All trips must:

- Have a clear educational purpose.
- Include all students regardless of ability to pay.
- Use District-approved locations and transportation.
- Follow established timelines and chaperone ratios.
- Avoid the use of private vehicles or unapproved fundraising.

Scheduling and Timing

- Trips typically occur throughout the school year, but trips sponsored and supported by schools during the summer must also follow these Administrative Procedures.
- Trips should not be scheduled during PSSA testing windows. Trips scheduled during that window require Assistant Superintendent approval.
- When an activity extends beyond the school day, Chaperones must supervise students until each student is picked up by an authorized parent, guardian, or designated adult.

Getting Started - Field Trip Planning & Approval

Planning a trip? Schools are responsible for assembling a complete trip packet (see checklists below).

Schools should not make financial commitments or vendor payments until the trip has been fully approved. No commitments, fundraising, or payments should occur until the trip is approved.

Use the checklists below to confirm all required documents are completed and submitted to the Learning Network Executive Assistant (LN EA). Documents may only be submitted after all required forms have been collected, and the Principal has signed the Principal Acknowledgement Form.

Once all materials have been received, the Learning Network Executive Assistant will conduct a final compliance review. For trips outside the city of Philadelphia, the packet will be routed to the Assistant Superintendent and Associate Superintendent for required signatures. Upon completion of all approvals, the school will receive official authorization to proceed with the trip.

For Day Trips: In-City

For In-City trips, the principal is the final reviewer and approver.

	Required	Submitted to LN EA for Awareness
Student list with name and ID numbers for participating students	✓	✓
Detailed Itinerary , including a full description of all planned activities for the trip	✓	✗
List of any confirmed non-SDP staff chaperones. All non-SDP staff chaperones must have clearances on file	✓	✗
Field Trip School-Level Compliance Principal Acknowledgment form	✓	✓
Signed EH-81	✓	✓
Transportation Confirmation	✓	✗
Insurance/COI Approval Email from Risk Management if the location is not on the list of locations with active insurance	✓	✗
Physical Activity Approval Email	✓	✗
Signed EH-80 Permission Slip for every student	✓	✗
Student Health and Medication Requirements	✓	✗

For Day Trips: Out-of-City & In/Out-of-State

Out-of-City and In/Out-of-State trips require Assistant and Associate Superintendent approval.

	Required	Submitted to LN EA for Review & Approval
Student list with name and ID numbers for participating students	✓	✓
Detailed Itinerary , including a full description of all planned activities for the trip	✓	✓
List of any confirmed non-SDP staff chaperones. All non-SDP staff chaperones must have clearances on file.	✓	✓
Field Trip School-Level Compliance Principal Acknowledgment form	✓	✓
Signed EH-81	✓	✓
Transportation Confirmation	✓	✗
Insurance/COI Approval Email from Risk Management if the location is not on the list of locations with active insurance	✓	✓
Physical Activity Approval Email	✓	✓
Signed EH-80 Permission Slip for every student	✓	✗
Student Health and Medication Requirements	✓	✗

Out-of-city trips may not proceed until all required documents have been collected and you have received an EH-81 signed by the Principal, Assistant Superintendent and Associate Superintendent). Please email your Learning Network Executive Assistant if you have any questions.

For Overnight & International Trips

Overnight and International trips require Assistant and Associate Superintendent approval.

	Required	Submitted to LN EA for Review & Approval
Student list with name and ID numbers for students with permission slips	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Detailed Itinerary , including a full description of all planned activities for the trip	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
List of any confirmed non-SDP staff chaperones. All non-SDP staff chaperones must have clearances on file.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Field Trip School-Level Compliance Principal Acknowledgment form	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Signed EH-81	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Transportation Confirmation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Insurance/COI Approval Email from Risk Management if the location is not on the list of locations with active insurance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Physical Activity Approval Email	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Signed EH-80 Permission Slip for every student	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Student Health and Medication Requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hotel Confirmation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Room Assignments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Trips may not proceed until all required documents have been collected and you have received a signed EH-81 for all overnight trips and international trips. Please email your Learning Network Executive Assistant if you have any questions.

Trip Types, Chaperone Ratios & Required Submission Deadlines

Trip Types

- In-City: Locations with a 191XX zip code; requires principal approval
- Out-of-City: Requires network and District approval.
- Overnight: Requires network and District approval.
- International: Requires network and District approval and parent airport pickup

Chaperone Ratios and Approval Levels

Trip Type	Chaperone Ratio	Gender Specific	Approval	Required Notice
In-City	1 adult per 10 students*	Not required	Principal	2 weeks
Out-of-City	1 adult per 10 students	Not required	Network/Division	6 weeks
Overnight	1 adult per 10 students	Required	Network/Division	6 weeks
International	1 adult per 5 students	Required	Network/Division	6 - 12 months

* Visits to Fox Chase Farm only require two chaperones per class.

Volunteer Requirements

- All non-District staff chaperones must have clearances on file in accordance with [Board Policy 916](#). The [FACE Office](#) Provides guidance for how to obtain necessary clearances.
- Principals must complete the [Confirmation of Volunteer Chaperone Clearances Form](#) prior to the trip.

Transportation

- Schools must use one of the District approved mechanisms for transportation.
- Approved means for transporting students for field trips, including the use of off-peak service or charter buses, may be found [here](#).
- Private vehicles **may not** be used by school personnel to transport students on trips.

Insurance & Contracting

Insurance Requirements

The Office of Risk Management maintains a [List of Locations with Active Insurance](#). This list identifies locations with an active Certificate of Insurance (COI) that meets District requirements. The Field Trip Vendor List:

- confirms that the vendor's insurance meets District standards
- does not constitute approval for specific activities. Activity approval is determined separately.

Vendor Insurance Documentation

If a trip destination does not appear on the District's List of Locations with an Active Certificate of Insurance (COI) on file, the school must work directly with the vendor to obtain a current COI that meets District requirements. The school must email the COI to the Office of Risk Management (Cheryl Rollins, crollins@philasd.org) for review and approval. Written confirmation of approval must be received before the trip can proceed to final approval.

Schools should reference the [sample COI](#) and share with the vendor's insurance broker to ensure compliance with District specifications.

Trips Requiring a Limited Contract Agreement (LCA)

Trips coordinated through a specific organization, travel agent, or tour company require:

- a Limited Contract Agreement (LCA)
- an approved Certificate of Insurance

All activities, services, and responsibilities must be reflected in the contract scope of work. Use this new [form](#) to provide basic information about the agreement. It generally takes about 6-8 weeks to produce a fully executed contract.

The following organizations have current contracts and insurance on file for travel and related trip activities:

- Education First (EF Tours)
- World Affairs Council (WAC)
- Tiger Woods Foundation
- Discovery Pathways

Locations that do not require a COI include:

- Federal, state, or municipal facilities and parks (e.g., the U.S. Capitol, Smithsonian museums, Parks)
- Museums operated by government entities
- State universities and colleges
- Movie theaters, production theaters like Broadway shows
- Restaurants and hotels (chain establishments are preferred for safety and quality assurance)

Restricted, Conditional, and Physical Activities

Activities NOT Approved for District Trips

- Skydiving, indoor skydiving (iFLY), parasailing, bungee jumping, trampoline parks
- Water or amusement parks
 - Exception: Students may participate in a scheduled academic competition or performance when formally invited. Official documentation (e.g., a written invitation from the hosting organization) must be submitted with the request.
 - Note: Amusement park rides remain prohibited and will not be approved under any circumstance.
- Inflatables, go-karts, ATVs, dirt bikes
- Snowmobiling, jet skiing, scuba diving, snorkeling, polar plunges
- Beaches and open water activities
- Bouldering

Activities Requiring Special Review & Approval

The Director of Health, Safety & Physical Education must review activities such as:

- Climbing, ropes courses, ziplining, and belaying
- Camping and boating (canoeing, kayaking)
- Skiing, snowboarding, or swimming in pools

Trips that include physical activities beyond normal walking (e.g., hiking, climbing, ropes courses, swimming, boating, skiing, or similar activities) require review and approval. Schools must email the Health, Safety & Physical Education team, Nancy Nayowith, at nmnayowith@philasd.org and Steven Buller at sbuller@philasd.org to request review and approval.

In some circumstances, a Limited Contract Agreement (LCA) contract may be required for high-risk activities.

Requirements for Physical Activities

- Vendors must supply a safety/skills lesson for students.
- Certified instructors and first-aid access are required.
- Schools should carry a stocked first-aid kit, including menstrual products.

Standing Exception: Outward Bound

- Outward Bound (Discovery Center) programs are pre-approved for physical activity and insurance.
 - Vendor vans are approved for student transport.
 - Insight (1-day) and Expedition (overnight) programs are covered by existing agreements.

Student Safety and Well-Being

Lodging and Room Assignment Requirements

Room assignments will be designated by gender, and under no circumstances will more than one student be assigned per bed.

Accommodation for Gender Identity: Transgender and gender non-conforming students will be provided with accommodations, which may include a single room or in the alternative, a roommate assignment based on the student's confidential request and in alignment with [Policy 252](#).

Student Health and Medication Requirements

Students participating in field trips may need medication administration during the course of the field trip. Schools must coordinate with the school nurse, and if necessary, with families, to determine how medication can be administered in accordance with Policy 121 and Policy 210. Careful coordination with the school nurse is essential to support students' health needs on trips.

Advance Notice and Nurse Coordination

- While notification earlier than two weeks is strongly encouraged to ensure adequate planning and staffing, schools must notify the school nurse of the planned trip no later than two (2) weeks prior to departure and provide a copy of the class list of participating students.
- The school nurse will review participating students to determine what, if any, health supports are required and communicate necessary arrangements to the principal, parents, and appropriate staff. If the nursing request is submitted the day of the trip, nursing support will not be available.

Medication & Plan of Care Requirements

For any student requiring medication or health services during a field trip:

- A current plan of care, developed and maintained by the school nurse in accordance with Policy 210, must be in place for the duration of the trip.
- The plan of care must clearly describe:
 - Medication formulation
 - Dosage
 - Route of administration
 - Timing/frequency
- Medications must be provided in the original container labeled with the student's name.
- The plan of care must identify who will be responsible for administering medication during the trip.
- Students (high school students only) who will self-carry and self-administer medication must have a completed and approved [Self Medication Assessment Form](#) on file, signed by the parent/guardian and healthcare provider. The school nurse must assess and confirm the student's ability to self-administer prior to the trip.

Permissible Medication Administration During Trips

Medication administration during a trip may be provided by:

- Parent/Guardian, who may voluntarily attend to provide care. Schools may not require parent attendance. A parent/guardian may designate, in writing, a responsible adult to provide care, subject to District restrictions. A parent/guardian may not designate a school staff member, school-designated chaperone, or secondary student.
- Agency Nurse: When notified with sufficient advance notice, the District may provide an agency nurse, when available, to accompany the student and administer medication.
- Licensed Volunteer: The District may permit a licensed volunteer to administer medication whose license is active and in good standing and is appropriately trained to administer the required treatment using the student's prescribed equipment and medication.
- A high school student may self-carry and self-administer medication only if a completed and approved [Self Medication Assessment Form](#) is on file, signed by both the parent/guardian and healthcare provider.
- Staff may administer emergency medication (e.g., inhalers, EpiPens) in accordance with Policy 210.

Fiscal Rules

- No commitments, fundraising, or payments should occur until the trip is approved.
- A signed EH-81 must be attached to all trip-related purchase order requests.
- Trip-related expenses must align with an approved scope, budget, and itinerary.

Support

- Email: fieldtrips@philasd.org
- Weekly Office Hours: Fridays, 11:00–12:00 Join the meeting [here](#)
- Contact the Learning Network Executive Assistant

Maintenance Schedule

These administrative procedures shall be reviewed upon the review of the policy, or upon the occurrence of a triggering event.

Related Information:

- [Policy 121 - Field Trips](#)
- [Policy 210 - Medications and Emergency Health Procedures](#)
- [Policy 252 - Transgender And Gender Non-Conforming Students](#)