

Field Trips

All schools should attempt to provide at least one opportunity annually for students to participate in a trip, excursion, or special activity held off campus. All such trips will be in compliance with Board-approved basic guidelines governing trips and the Student Code of Conduct governing behavior of all participants. ~~{See FMF(LOCAL), FMG(LOCAL), and The Code of Student Conduct}~~ Additional rules and guidelines may be developed by the individual schools or sponsors to assist with maintaining high standards of safety and conduct. All rules will be distributed to students, parents or guardians, and chaperones prior to the event. Each school office will serve as a clearinghouse and repository for field trip information for its respective schools. ~~Chief school officers~~ Division chiefs will be responsible for ensuring that the District's procedures governing field trips are followed.

Participation

As an extension of the educational process, all appropriate students (in a class, grade level, subject area, team, club, and the like) will be permitted to attend the field trip. Students participating in University Interscholastic League (UIL) activities must meet eligibility requirements in order to participate in such activities.

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) provides students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in field trips and other extracurricular activities. Prohibiting or limiting the participation of a student with a disability in field trips may constitute unlawful discrimination under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

All students with disabilities must be provided the same opportunity to participate in field trips as nondisabled peers unless it is determined by an Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD)/Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 committee that the student should not attend the field trip for a clearly justifiable reason. The decision for a student not to participate on a field trip should be made on an individual basis. The burden of proof for demonstrating the student should not participate in a field trip is on the District. Participation in field trips cannot be denied based on:

1. Lack of funds;
2. Medical conditions (unless the field trip activity presents an unacceptable risk to student health or safety); or
3. A parent or guardian being unable to attend the field trip.

If a student with disabilities requires supports and services while on a field trip, the District is required to provide these accommodations to ensure participation. Students with disabilities and their families should receive notice about the planned field trip when all

other students and their families receive the notice. Should it be determined that a student with a disability cannot attend a field ~~the~~ trip, the decision to exclude the student from participation and the reasons for the exclusion must be considered and agreed upon by an ARD/IEP or Section 504 committee. The ARD/IEP document or Section 504 Accommodation Plan will serve as the Notice of Proposal to exclude the student from the field trip if this decision is necessary.

If a student with a disability, who is otherwise eligible to attend a field trip, is excluded from attending a field trip, documentation justifying the exclusion is required. Such documentation must be maintained for at least one year. Note, a blanket decision regarding students with a certain disability is not justification for exclusion; educational decisions regarding opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in extracurricular activities must be made in conformance with the regulations of Section 504 and Title II, i.e., decisions must reflect determinations made by a group of persons — including persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options — rather than unilateral determinations.

Field Trip Costs

Schools or District sponsors will incur the costs associated with the field trip including transportation, admission fees, tickets, and materials necessary for the trip. Students and their parents or guardians will not be charged for any portion of the field trip although fund-raisers and donations (in accordance with applicable policies and regulations) may be used to offset costs associated with the field trip.

Parent Approval Forms

Teachers and central office personnel sponsoring field trips, excursions, or special activities requiring parental approval will have the appropriate form completed by the parent or guardian and on file prior to participation by the student. Forms may be obtained ~~on HISDConnect~~ at www.houstonisd.org (~~Departments~~ [Directory](#), Federal and State Compliance, Forms [& Documents](#)). ~~Form 40.0079 — Parent Approval, Field Trip Permission Slip Approval Form, printed available~~ in English, [and](#) Spanish, ~~and Vietnamese,~~). The [form](#) refers to field trips, but may be used for other similar functions. Additional forms needed for satisfactory completion of arrangements may be required by the individual school or sponsor. [See [the form](#) ~~Form 40.4250 — Release of Liability for Student Participation in Trip with Destination Outside the United States~~]

Trip Planning

All field trips require pre-planning on the part of the sponsor, the school, and the District. The following time frame will be used. Failure to adhere to the time frames ~~s~~ may result in loss of school or departmental funds.

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1. Out-of-District or long trips (excluding UIL trips) — 60 days.
2. Foreign travel — 120 days.

Sponsors

The sponsor for an ~~an Houston Independent School District (HISD)~~ field trip or excursion will be approved by the principal and will accompany the group to, from, and during the function. The sponsor must be a school faculty or central office staff member and will have the following basic duties and responsibilities in facilitating a field trip or excursion:

Preparation

The sponsor will review all Board policies and procedures as well as individual school rules governing trips and excursions prior to planning. [See CFD(LOCAL), FM(LEGAL), [and FM\(LOCAL\)](#); ~~FMF(LOCAL), and FMG(LOCAL)~~]

Permission

The sponsor will obtain pre-planning permission for the trip or excursion. Students and parents or guardians should not become involved in any preparation or activity relative to the trip until after the pre-planning permission has been granted by the principal or designee.

Coordination

The sponsor will coordinate all plans and arrangements for the trip. The sponsor will compile a report using the *Sponsor's Request for Approval of Field Trip* form, including attachments as necessary, for presentation to the principal or designee and other appropriate administrator, if required. ~~[See Form 40.5110 — Sponsor's Request for Approval of Field Trip]~~ The guidelines for planning and arranging a trip are as follows:

Educational
Purpose

If the trip will involve loss of school time, the report will list specific learning activities to be accomplished by students either before they leave or as a part of their activities during the trip. [See FM(LEGAL)]

Itinerary

The itinerary will include the destination, type of transportation, and dates of the trip.

Transportation

School buses may be used for field trips. [For specific guidelines regarding limits, timelines, special needs, cancellations, and changes, see CNA~~21~~(REGULATION)] Private carrier companies with appropriate contracts and private passenger cars and vans with a rated passenger capacity of no more than ten persons (including the driver) may be used. [\[See CNA\(LEGAL\)\]](#) Proof of automobile liability insurance is required for any private passenger vehicle utilized. [See CNA(~~LEGAL~~[LOCAL](#)) ~~and CNA2(REGULATION)~~]

Accounting

The report should list the cost per student and how the trip will be financed. Students may participate in fund-raising activities

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to defray expenses. Fund-raising activities must conform to Board policy and District procedures, and all funds collected will be handled in accordance with Board policy. [See CFD(LOCAL), FJ(LOCAL), FJ(REGULATION), and [the form Form 40.4250—Release of Liability for Student Participation in Trip with Destination Outside the United States](#)]

Field trips required as part of a basic educational program or course will be provided by the District. Extracurricular and out-of-District trips will be paid for by the school except for certain UIL competition as outlined in Board policy. [See FM(LEGAL), [and FM\(LOCAL\)](#), ~~and FMF(LOCAL)~~]

Chaperones

The sponsor will obtain at least the minimum number of chaperones required and will verify that chaperones who may have driving responsibilities have evidence of a valid Texas driver's license and automobile liability insurance. All chaperones who are not District employees will be referred to the principal's designee to register with Volunteers in Public Schools and will participate in the volunteer criminal history background check. Volunteers must clear the background check before they can begin volunteer work. [See GKG1(REGULATION) and GKG2(REGULATION)]

Students

Students must be passing all subjects to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. The report will include a list of students going on the field trip with verification that the students are eligible to participate in the field trip in accordance with attendance and extracurricular activity policies. [See FM(LEGAL) and FM(LOCAL)]

Notification of
School
Personnel

Sponsors must provide a list of students scheduled to participate in a field trip to teachers and attendance clerks so accurate attendance may be recorded.

Nonparticipants

Should a student or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) choose not to participate in a class field trip, the student must be assigned to another classroom during the scheduled time of the trip.

No Travel
During Exams

Field trips may not be scheduled during state- or District-mandated exams without prior approval of the principal.

Safety Plan

The sponsor will create a plan to ensure the safety and security of students. The safety plan should include, as a minimum, procedures to manage particular safety issues relative to the trip (e.g., a trip involving hunting will involve gun safety guidelines); identification and phone numbers of local emergency medical facilities and local police departments; and

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procedures to connect to same as some areas may not support cellular phone use.

<i>Final Approval</i>	The sponsor will request final approval from the principal in adequate advance time.
<i>Parental Approval</i>	The sponsor will obtain signed parent approval forms for each student involved prior to participation by the student. If the trip is out-of-District, the sponsor must obtain any unusual medical information for students, which may be necessary in the event of an emergency. [See the <i>Handbook for School Health</i> Goal IV Identifying and Solving Student Health Problems]
<i>Out-of-District or Long Trips</i>	If a trip is scheduled out-of-District or for an extended period, the sponsor will hold an orientation meeting for briefing parents or guardians, students, and chaperones; furnishing complete trip information; communicating basic responsibilities; and distributing written rules of safety and conduct to be followed. The sponsor will maintain a record of the meeting for review by the principal.
<i>Foreign Travel</i>	<p>If a trip involves travel outside of the United States, the sponsor will secure a signed Form 40.4250, Release of Liability for Student Participation in Trip with Destination outside the United States; for each student who is to participate prior to taking the trip. [See Form 40.4250—Release of Liability for Student Participation in Trip with Destination Outside the United States]</p> <p>A one-time only international field trip will require the approval of the Superintendent. Schools that plan to take frequent trips as a sister school to another country or several international trips throughout the year must develop a plan for each trip. The plan must be presented for approval to the Superintendent in advance of the trip. The Superintendent must give signature approval of the plan and travel requests.</p>
<i>Student Profile</i>	The sponsor will maintain duplicate listings of all participating students with telephone numbers for reaching parents or guardians in the event of an emergency. The sponsor will leave one listing with the school and apprise the chaperone(s) of the location of the one retained by the sponsor.
<i>Trip Responsibilities</i>	The sponsor has the responsibility, with the assistance of chaperones, for maintaining order, adhering to the schedule of the trip, and enforcing safety and conducting rules for the welfare of the students.
<i>Supervision</i>	The sponsor will supervise and direct chaperones. In the event the principal is accompanying the group, the principal will maintain a customary role and will have final authority in any conflict of decision.

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<i>Discipline</i>	The sponsor will follow up immediately on all rule infractions observed or reported.
<i>Employee Conduct</i>	As a representative of the District, the sponsor will maintain exemplary conduct at all times and expect the same of the students. [See DH(LOCAL) and <i>The Code of Student Conduct</i>]
<i>Final Report</i>	The sponsor will prepare a written report for the principal upon return, including special points of interest, success or failure of trip, and any misconduct or accidents that may have occurred.
Chaperones	The purpose of chaperones is to assist the sponsor in maintaining high standards of safety and conduct.
<i>Minimum Requirements</i>	<p>The minimum chaperone requirements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elementary Sschool — one chaperone per 12 students;• Middle Sschool — one chaperone per 12 students; and• High Sschool — one chaperone per 12 students.
<i>Additional Requirements</i>	<p>The following factors should be taken into consideration when providing additional chaperones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age of group;• Size of group and manageability of students;• Makeup of group (boys, girls, mixed);• Type of function and general environment (festive, quiet, routine, cultural, scholastic, spectator, participating);• Amount of free or unplanned time to be available (this should always be kept to a minimum);• Amount of mobility required for participation;• Likelihood of a large group dividing into several smaller groups and going in different directions;• Safety and security plan for students;• Mode of transportation; and• Length of trip or excursion (daytime only, overnight, extended). <p>In order to expect total commitment of the chaperones, funds should include provisions for the appropriate number of chaperones for travel, admissions tickets, and lodging if applicable. How-</p>

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ever, all adults included in the trip must agree to serve as chaperones, abide by the established guidelines, and be committed to the safety and good conduct of the students and to the success of the trip or excursion.

Responsibilities

Chaperones are charged with the following basic responsibilities. Additional instructions that are not in conflict with the directives in this regulation may be included by the individual schools as deemed helpful for the safe and orderly conduct of the trip. The chaperone will:

- Participate in and clear a volunteer criminal history background check as outlined in GKG1(REGULATION);
- Attend any pre-trip orientation sessions planned by the sponsor;
- Become familiar with the purpose of a chaperone in safeguarding the welfare of students;
- Become familiar with all rules and regulations governing the trip prior to departure;
- Provide evidence of a valid Texas driver's license and automobile liability insurance prior to being listed as a chaperone if driving will be one of the duties;
- Assist the sponsor in orderly management of the group;
- Have no other responsibilities at the time of the field trip that may detract from the supervision of the students (no other children, not on-call for a job, and the like);
- Report to the sponsor all infractions of safety rules and unacceptable conduct for resolution by the sponsor or authorized professional;
- Maintain exemplary conduct at all times, in the same manner as that which is expected of the students in accordance with *The Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., use of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances is prohibited at any HISD-sponsored event);
- Dress appropriately for the activities of the trip and in accordance with school guidelines; and
- Be on duty and supervising at location of students at all times during the trip.

**Types of School
Trips**

Excursions and special trips by students, excluding academic and athletic contests, may be approved under certain conditions and in

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accordance with Board policy. ~~[See FMF(LOCAL) and FMG(LOCAL)]~~ The various types of school trips include:

- Out-of-District Trips The principal must secure the approval of the appropriate division chief ~~school officer~~ before permitting students to represent the school on an excursion or at a special program or activity. ~~Form 40.5110~~ — The form *Sponsor's Request for Approval of Field Trip*, accompanied by a written statement giving the details of the excursion, along with the specific learning activities related to the trip and the time frame for accomplishment, will be completed and sent to the appropriate school office at least two weeks in advance of the occasion. ~~[See Form 40.5110 — Sponsor's Request for Approval of Field Trip]~~ Out-of-District trips will be limited to two school days. If more than two days are required, approval from the Superintendent or designee will be necessary. Parent or guardian approval is also required.
- Trips Outside the United States Trips that involve travel out of the United States will be limited to middle and high school students (grades ~~98~~—12) only and will require prior approval of the Superintendent or designee. Travel will be allowed only to countries where the political climate is favorable. For information on travel warnings issued by the United States Department of State, go to <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>. [See ~~FMG(LOCAL) and~~ *Foreign Travel*, above]
- In addition to signed parent approval, parents or guardians of all students traveling on HISD-associated trips outside the country will be required to sign a waiver of liability releasing HISD, its Board members, agents, and employees and the sponsors and chaperones from any liability for injuries or damages that may occur on the trip. The form ~~Form 40.4250~~ — *Release of Liability for Student Participation in Trip with Destination Outside the United States* will be used for this purpose and is available ~~on HISDConnect at~~ www.houstonisd.org (~~Departments~~ Directory, Federal and State Compliance, Forms and Documents, Field Trip - Release of Liability for Student Participation).
- Tours Planned by Service Organizations The following procedures apply to out-of-District tours planned by service organizations:
- Absence from school should not exceed ~~two~~ three school days;
 - The trip must have valid educational purposes and be well planned in advance. Specific learning activities related to the trip and the time frame for accomplishment will accompany the request;

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- Adequate supervision will be provided to ensure high standards of conduct and discipline;
- The list of students must be approved by the principal and the appropriate school office;
- Signed parent or guardian approval is required; and
- Trips that involve travel outside of the United States will be authorized for middle and high school students (grades ~~9~~8–12) only and will require prior approval of the Superintendent or designee.

Local Trips Local trips include those trips that stay within Harris County and its adjacent counties. Local trips will only require approval of the school principal.

HISD-Scheduled Events All events scheduled through the central administration office will not require notification or approval. Written permission of the parent(s) or guardian(s), however, is necessary for participation in these events.

Tournaments Each school will limit out-of-District tournaments (speech, mathematics, and the like) that require absence from school up to three days for any one student during the school year. Associate teachers will be provided for each sponsoring teacher not to exceed three days during the school year. All dates for such tournaments will be cleared through the appropriate school office.

Travel Agency or For-Profit Company Trips Trips sponsored by a travel agency, for-profit company, or other organization not formally doing business with the District are not considered field trips and will not be associated with any school or the District. This includes trips that are sponsored or chaperoned by an HISD employee. ~~The following actions are not permitted for~~ As it pertains to such trips:

- ~~No~~ The use of District funds ~~or resources may be used~~ is prohibited;
- ~~No~~ The use of District form templates ~~may be used~~ in preparation of the trip is prohibited;
- ~~No~~ The loss of instructional time ~~may be lost~~ for students is prohibited;
- No liability will be assumed by the District; and
- No HISD employees ~~will~~ may serve as ~~an agents~~ or representatives of the District while on such a trip.

Consultation

~~This regulation does not require consultation.~~

**Maintenance
Responsibility**

The deputy chief, Strategic Initiatives, ~~academic officer, Academic Services,~~ is responsible for maintenance of this regulation.