

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Southwest Area Schools Office & Charter Schools

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**STUDENT FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES**

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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. Purpose. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide Southwest Area & Charter Schools guidelines regarding student trips except for UIL and athletic competitions.
2. Effective. Immediately
3. Applicability. This memorandum applies to schools within the Secondary School Office 1.
4. Guidelines Governing Student Trips. All student trips, excursions, or special activities held off campus will be in compliance with board-approved basic guidelines, policies, and procedures contained in the listed References. For schools that report to the Secondary School Office 1, the following additional rules and guidelines will be applicable:
  - a. Local Trips. *The Principal will notify the Schools Office in writing, **at least three weeks prior to the trip**, that students will be representing the school locally on an excursion or at a special program or activity. Local trips are considered trips within Harris County and its adjacent counties (Liberty, Chambers, Galveston, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Waller, Grimes, and Montgomery). Form 40.5110, Sponsor's Request for Approval of Field Trip, signed by the Principal will serve as written notification.*
  - b. Out-of-District. Form 40.5110 will be completed and *submitted to the Schools Office at least **four** weeks prior if the trip is out-of-district or for an extended period*. The form will be accompanied by complete trip information to include the following:
    - (1) A list of specific learning objectives and activities related to the trip. It is recommended that schools use the Field Lesson Implementation Plan format for providing this information. This form is required when using Title I, Part A funding.
    - (2) An itinerary that will include at a minimum details on destinations, transportation, lodging, and the key dates and times of the trip and its activities.
    - (3) List of chaperones and titles. All chaperones who are not District employees must have registered with Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) and cleared the criminal history background check before being allowed to chaperone.
    - (4) List of students going on the trip with verification that they are eligible to participate in accordance with attendance and extracurricular activity policies.
    - (5) Verification that any unusual medical information on students which may be necessary in the event of an emergency has been obtained.
    - (6) Verification that Parent Approval Form will be completed by the parent and on file at the school prior to participation by the student.

- (7) Verification that all appropriate students (in a class, grade level, subject area, team, club, and the like) have been informed they are permitted to participate.
        - (8) Verification that parents and students have been informed that the school will incur the costs associated with the field trip. Parents and students will not be charged for any portion although fund raisers and donations may be used to offset the costs associated with the field trip.
      - c. **Trips outside the United States.** Foreign **travel will be limited to high school students** and will be allowed only to countries where the political climate is favorable. Information on travel warnings issued by the U.S. Department of State can be obtained at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html). In addition to the documentation required for out-of-district trips Form 40.4250, Release of Liability for Student Participation in Trip with Destination outside the United States, will be completed for each student who is participating in the trip. Copies of the Release of Liability forms and Parent Approval forms must be submitted to the Schools Office with the trip request prior to being forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools for approval.
5. **Preplanning Permission from the Superintendent of Schools.** **Out-of-district trips outside the United States, require the approval of the School Support Officer, Chief School Officer and Superintendent of Schools. All trips outside of Texas require the Chief School Officer Signature.** Schools are required to obtain preplanning permission for these trips. Preplanning permission should be obtained no later than 60 days prior to out-of-district trips and 120 days prior for foreign travel. *Parents and students should not become involved in any preparation activity related to the trip until after the preplanning permission has been granted by the Superintendent of Schools.* It is recommended that this permission be obtained by a memorandum request. A sample memorandum is attached.
6. **Field Lessons Funded Through Title I, Part A.** Schools must complete and submit all forms associated with field lessons funded through Title I, Part A, at least 30 working days prior to the date of the field lesson. Required field lesson forms are the Field Lesson Implementation Plan, Sponsor's Request for Approval of Field Trip, Bus Transportation Request Form confirmation summary page, Direct Pay form where fees are to be charged, and any backup documentation for the such as confirmation letter, invoice for advance payment, or brochure stating prices. In addition, the Secondary School Office 1 requires that all schools submit a Field Lesson Plan for all field trips that are conducted during instructional time.
7. **Tournaments.** Athletic, academic, and UIL related tournament events **do not** require the submission of a Field Trip Request Form or Field Lesson Implementation Plan to the Schools Office. However, the Teacher, Sponsor, or Coach is responsible for coordinating all plans and arrangements and compiling all necessary information pertaining to the trip for presentation to the Principal or other appropriate administrator, as required by the type of tournament event. Please indicate next to the name of field trip, on the Sponsor's Request for Field Trip form, that trip is an athletic academic or UIL related.
8. Forms may be submitted to the Schools Office by courier, HISD inter-office mail, scanned/ e-mailed or faxed to the attention of the School Support Officer at 713-556-4447.
9. **Questions Regarding this Memorandum...** may be referred to your School Support Officer or the Chief School Officer at 713-556-4447.
10. **Memo Maintenance Responsibility.** Chief School Officer.

REFERENCES:	(a) Board Policy CNA(LEGAL)	Transportation Management: Student Transportation
	(b) Board Policy FM(LEGAL)	Student Activities
	(c) Board Policy FM(LOCAL)	Student Activities
	(d) Board Policy FMF(LOCAL)	Student Activities: Contests and Competition
	(e) Board Policy FMG(LOCAL)	Student Activities: Travel
	(f) Board Policy FMG (Regulation)	Student Activities: Travel
	(g) Form 40.4250	Release of Liability for Student Participation in Trip with Destination Outside the United States
	(h) Form 40.5110	Sponsor's Request for Approval of Field Trip
	(i) Form	Parent Approval Form: English
	(j) Form	Parent Approval Form: Spanish