

PROCEDURE FOR FIELD TRIPS AND NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED TRIPS

A. Definitions

1. Field trips are activities outside the regular school setting which relate to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
2. A non-school-sponsored trip/tour is defined as a group tour sponsored by an individual teacher or teachers, a travel agency, or any other individual or association, but not sponsored by a school or the Board of Education.

B. Criteria for Approval of Field Trips

Field trips meeting the following criteria are permitted and encouraged.

1. The trip must be related to the curriculum, an extension of classroom activities, and not able to be provided in the local school setting.
2. Teachers will conduct introductory and culminating activities related to the field trip.
3. The trip must be reasonable in terms of time, distance, and cost; it can extend beyond the school day to ensure adequate visiting time on site.
4. A teacher, principal, or other school official will be responsible for conducting the trip and will plan giving careful consideration to student safety and well being. Parents will be provided a list of rules and regulations for students going on the field trip.
5. Written parental consent is required on the appropriate Pitt County Schools' Parent/Guardian Permission Form for a field trip before the trip takes place.
6. An appropriate educational experience and proper supervision must be supplied for any student whose parent/guardian does not permit him/her to participate in a field trip.
7. Every effort shall be made to see that no student is denied the opportunity to participate in a field trip because of an inability to pay.
8. With the principal's approval, a student may be excluded from a trip based on the recommendation of a teacher.
9. Transportation for field trips shall be provided in the following order of priority:
 - a. Vehicles owned by the Pitt County Schools
 - b. Privately chartered buses
10. Each school should review field trips annually and avoid duplication of visits.

C. Field Trip Requests

The Pitt County Schools' field trip request form and the notification to parents shall include the following information:

1. Anticipated educational value of the trip
2. Destination
3. Date of trip
4. Time of departure and return
5. Mode of travel
6. Proposed place of lodging
7. Cost per student
8. Information regarding proper attire for the student
9. A place for the parent's signature giving approval for the student's participation in the activity
10. Number of supervisors and chaperons
11. An emergency telephone number
12. A list of rules and regulations governing student behavior

D. Medical Authorizations

A signed medical authorization for each student participating in a field trip must be carried by the lead school sponsor throughout the trip and a copy of this authorization must be on file at the school. A list of students and field trip plans should be provided to the school nurse as early as possible to verify the ability to meet each student's medical needs.

E. Chaperones

Each field trip shall be chaperoned by responsible adults over the age of 21 at a minimum ratio of:

1. One adult for each 15 students grades K-8
2. One adult for each class grades 9-12

Exceptions to this ratio may occur in classes of children with special needs.

F. Parent Information

At all times the individual(s) supervising the trip shall have the name, address, and home and business telephone numbers of the parents/guardians of the students. This information shall be made available to every responsible adult supervising each field trip.

G. Authority to Approve Field Trips

1. The Pitt County Schools request form for all field trips must be submitted to the principal for prior approval before any discussion with students.
2. The request form for day trips, overnight trips and out-of-state field trips must be submitted to the principal for approval prior to specific planning of the trip. The principal must secure approval from the Superintendent or his/her designee for overnight and

out-of-state trips, at least one month in advance of the trip.

3. Prior to approval, the principal must verify with the school nurse that a list of students has been submitted and each student's medical needs can be met.

H. Field Trips Outside the Continental United States

Field trips outside the continental United States may be approved by the Board of Education at its discretion, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, provided:

1. The request for approval is submitted at least four months in advance of the date of the trip and before any money which cannot be refunded is collected from students or their parents or guardians; and
2. Board approval may be withdrawn by the Superintendent, subject to the review by the Board, if it appears that the above criteria are not being met or will not be met by the field trip sponsor.

I. Field trips/Competitions by School Groups

School-sponsored field trips or tours by school clubs, chorus groups, bands or athletic teams must meet the same criteria as all other school-sponsored field trips, but may be covered by one blanket parental permission form obtained at the beginning of the year or season. This blanket permission form does not apply to overnight and out-of-state trips.

J. Non-School-Sponsored Tours

The Pitt County Board of Education recognizes that it has no authority to regulate the travel of teachers and students on weekends, during school holidays, and over the summer vacation, unless they are involved in a school-sponsored activity. The Board further recognizes that non-school-sponsored tours guided by teachers which are specifically designed for students can be educationally beneficial to both teachers and students. Because of the potential for a conflict between the interests of the school, the teacher and the student, the Board believes it is necessary and appropriate to establish the following requirements for any school employee who sponsors or acts as a chaperone for a non-school-sponsored tour:

1. Such tours should be scheduled over weekends, holidays and summer vacations and generally should not be scheduled on days when school is to be in session. It is the opinion of this Board that a teacher's responsibility to the students assigned to his/her classes outweighs the benefits that may be acquired by the teacher and students taking a tour. Teachers who sponsor or chaperone such tours on days when school is in session may be granted personal leave without pay for any absences in excess of their accumulated personal leave.
2. The planning and administration of such tours shall not be performed by school employees during the employee's work day, with the exception of promotional activities as described below.

a. School employees sponsoring such a tour may post notices, make

announcements, and distribute literature about the tour so long as these promotional activities do not occur during the class time.

- b. Promotional literature shall contain a statement clearly indicating that the tour is not sponsored by the school or by the Pitt County Board of Education. A copy of any promotional literature shall be filed in the principal's office. It is the responsibility of the school employee who sponsors such a tour to notify, in writing, any students and parents who are considering participation in such a tour that the tour is not sponsored by the school or the Board of Education.