

Category: **STUDENTS**

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Subject: SCHOOL TRIPS

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**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

This regulation supersedes Chancellor's Regulation A-670 dated March 16, 2005.

The regulation sets forth the rules and procedures governing school trips for students at all levels of the school system. It provides guidelines for planning and executing field trips for students and outlines the responsibilities of superintendents, principals and staff. It establishes clearly defined ratios of staff and other adults to students and rules for handling emergency situations.

**Changes:**

- This regulation now reflects the current organization of the Department of Education.
- International trips must be approved by the appropriate superintendent.
- This regulation clarifies insurance requirements for school trips.

## **ABSTRACT**

This regulation sets forth the rules, regulations, and procedures governing school trips. It supersedes Chancellor's Regulation A-670 dated March 16, 2005. A school trip is defined as any authorized field trip off school premises, regardless of the destination or method of transportation used. All building administrators and staff should familiarize themselves with this regulation to ensure that school trips will be productive, enjoyable, and safe experiences for students, parents, and staff.

### **I. OBJECTIVES**

- A. School trips afford students the opportunity to observe, explore, discover, and engage in hands-on experiences. Schools may sponsor trips before, during or after school hours.
- B. All school trips should have an educational or appropriate celebratory focus and be viewed as an extension of the curriculum and the learning environment.
- C. For all school trips, the principal shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate care is taken to ensure the safety of all participants.

### **II. PLANNING AND LOGISTICS**

#### **A. Planning**

- 1. All school trips must be approved in advance by the principal. Trips organized by special programs within the schools (i.e. clubs) are considered school trips and must be authorized in advance by the principal. International trips must also be approved in advance by the appropriate superintendent.
- 2. A trip plan must be prepared and must be retained in the school files for all trips. The plan must specify all information, including persons in charge, participating classes of students, lodging, activities, and locations to be visited, the names of all adults taking part, details of departure and return, method of transportation and carrier, and insurance coverage (see Attachment No. 1).
- 3. Special education students and students with Section 504 plans must be provided with transportation and accommodations appropriate to their needs.
- 4. Medical emergencies and contingencies should be included in planning for a trip. Adult supervisors should travel with first aid kits, telephone numbers for emergency services in the area, and emergency home contact numbers.
- 5. When planning a trip, staff should inquire whether government or school rates are available for lodging, transportation, etc. Tax exempt status should always be requested, and proof of that exemption should be included in communications with suppliers.

#### **B. Fees**

Fees, such as the cost of admissions and lodging, must not be excessive, and may not be such as to exclude students who would otherwise participate. A student may not be excluded due to an inability to pay the required fee. Where appropriate, schools may assist students in financial need so that they will be able to participate.

C. Parental Notification, Consent Forms and Documentation\*

1. Parents must be notified in writing in advance of the planned trip, and a parental consent form is required for each school trip. No student will be allowed to participate in a school trip unless his or her parent, guardian, or person in parental relation has signed a consent form allowing the student to participate (see Attachments Nos. 2 to 4). A student who is eighteen years of age or older, or an emancipated minor, may give consent her/himself.
2. Consent forms must identify activities with inherent risks (e.g., swimming, horseback riding, ice skating, use of physical fitness equipment) that students will engage in on the trip and must contain specific requests for parent permission to engage in those activities. If medical pre-clearance is required for a student to take part in the trip and/or participate in certain activities, it must be obtained in advance of the trip.
3. Where a student trip is sponsored by a parent/parent-teacher association or by an outside agency which has a relationship to the school and not by the DOE, parents must be advised explicitly of this fact and all documentation related to the trip must so indicate.

D. Supervision

1. The principal must designate a licensed teacher, assistant principal, or other supervisor participating in the trip as the individual with overall responsibility for the trip. For trips related to substance abuse programs, SAPIS workers who are regularly in charge of students may be designated as the individuals with overall responsibility for the trip.
2. Students must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times, and appropriate, adequate supervision must be provided at every level of a school trip. No student may be left unsupervised during any phase of a trip. Where the trip involves activities with inherent risks (e.g., swimming, horseback riding, ice skating, use of physical fitness equipment) the principal or designee must ensure that there is adult supervision appropriate to the activity while students engage in the activity. Where activities on the trip make it necessary or appropriate, protective equipment should be provided.
3. If a student must leave a school trip prematurely, she/he must be accompanied by a staff person if a parent cannot come for the student.
4. The principal is responsible for ensuring that the ratio of staff and adults to students on a school trip is appropriate for the trip, taking into consideration the age of participating students, the method of transportation, and the type of trip. The following ratios should be used:
  - a. Routine day trips within New York City:

For elementary and middle school students, at least one (1) staff member and two (2) additional adults are required for up to thirty (30) students. For high school students, at least one (1) staff member and one (1) additional adult are required for up to thirty (30) students. The required staff member must be a teacher or a supervisor. The other adult(s) may be a parent volunteer or a member of the instructional staff (e.g. teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide.

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\* Any letter or consent form sent in connection with this regulation should be sent, where feasible, in the parent(s) preferred language or mode of communication. In those cases where it is not possible to obtain a full translation, the letter and/or consent form should be sent in English with an attached notice in the parent(s) preferred language or mode of communication stating the following: "The attached letter contains important information about your child. Please have it translated as soon as possible."

- b. One day out-of-the-city or overnight trips:

For elementary, middle and high school students, at least two (2) staff members and one (1) adult are required for up to thirty (30) students. With respect to the two staff members noted above, one must be a teacher or supervisor. The other may be a member of the instructional staff (e.g. teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide.
  - c. Additional adults for the trips above:

At the elementary level, for each additional ten (10) students participating, an additional adult is required. At the middle and high school level, for each additional fifteen (15) students participating, an additional adult is required.
  - d. International trips

At least two (2) staff members are required for up to fifteen (15) students. It is recommended that at least one (1) parent volunteer also be included on the trip. With respect to the two staff members noted above, one must be a teacher or supervisor. The other may be a member of the instructional staff (e.g. teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide. For each additional ten (10) students participating, an additional adult is required.
  - e. Special Education students

For school trips involving Special Education students, the ratio of staff to students should be at least the same as the ratio mandated for their classes.
- 5. For all trips it is recommended that the staff members accompanying the students come from the same school sponsoring the trip. On occasion, where appropriate, the principal, in his or her discretion, may approve requests that staff from another school be used.
  - 6. Regardless of the type of trip, it is not permissible for students to meet at or be dismissed from a site other than the school unless the consent form specifically authorizes it. The principal or her/his designee must assume overall responsibility for receiving returning students. In cases where intervening circumstances make it impossible for the students to be dismissed from the agreed upon site, parent(s) must be contacted and advised of the situation and appropriate school staff must remain with the student(s) until such time as the parent(s) arrives. If a parent fails to pick up a child and repeated attempts to reach a parent or contact person are unsuccessful, the principal or designee must refer to region procedures for handling students left after school, or must contact the nearest police precinct.
  - 7. Siblings of students whose parents are accompanying them on a class trip are not permitted to take part in the trip.
- E. Emergency Circumstances
- 1. Missing Students
    - a. If one or more students cannot be accounted for at a trip site, the authorities with jurisdiction over the site must be notified immediately, and a search organized. If, following the search, the student(s) cannot be located, local police must be called immediately. The staff member in charge must make every effort to contact the parents, as well as his/her supervisor.
    - b. A staff member must remain at the site until all the students are accounted for. The staff member in charge shall determine whether other students and adults should leave the site. All such decisions shall be made in consultation with the staff member's supervisor. Parents should be kept updated as to the status of the search for their child.

2. Illness/Injury

- a. If a student becomes ill or is injured and is in need of assistance, appropriate health officials should be notified immediately. A determination must be made by health officials regarding the severity of the illness or injury, and if hospitalization is required, an adult must accompany the child. The parents must be notified immediately and advised of the whereabouts of the child (hospital, etc.) and the nature of the illness or injury.
- b. The staff member in charge shall determine whether other students and adults shall leave the site, but a staff member must remain until the ill or injured student is able to leave. All such decisions shall be made in consultation with the staff member's supervisor. Parents must be informed about the child's condition if they are not able to travel to the site.

**III. Transportation**

A. Schools may use any of the following means of transportation:

1. Public transit systems (e.g., subways, buses);
2. Registered commercial airlines;
3. Intercity buses or transit systems (e.g., Amtrak, Greyhound); and/or
4. Private authorized buses, including school buses, as set forth below:
  - a. Any vehicle utilized to transport students must comply with all federal, state, city, and Department of Education rules and regulations for the transport of students. This shall include, but is not limited to, standards established for vehicles, drivers, insurance, and companies. The Office of Pupil Transportation must be contacted to obtain a list of companies which provide service in compliance with these standards.
  - b. To request a bus for a school trip from the Office of Pupil Transportation, please contact the Field Trip Unit at 718-784-3313. This unit sends information to all schools prior to the start of each school year about the procedures for obtaining buses for trips. Please refer to these procedures when requesting bus service from the Office of Pupil Transportation.
  - c. Students may not be transported to or from the trip site on an unauthorized or private vehicle.

**IV. INSURANCE**

For school trips in which students engage in high-risk activities (e.g., swimming, water sports, horseback riding), schools should have on file documentation that the facilities which the student will be visiting have a general comprehensive liability insurance policy in an amount not less than \$2,000,000 per occurrence and written assurance from the facility that health, fire and safety standards conform to those required by their locality for the use of persons 4-21 years of age. In the event that such documentation is not received, the principal shall determine whether it is appropriate to proceed with the trip. Emergency medical group insurance must be purchased to cover all participants in international trips. All questions regarding insurance should be referred to the Office of Legal Services.

**V. LIABILITY**

Pursuant to New York State law, supervisory and teaching staff, and authorized participants in the school volunteer program may be entitled to legal representation and indemnification in connection with claims arising from acts or omissions while the employee/volunteer was acting within the scope of his/her public employment and in the discharge of his/her duties, and was not in violation of any rule or regulation of the Department of Education at the time the alleged act or omission occurred. In the event of a lawsuit naming a Department of Education employee/volunteer, the Department's Office of Legal Services must be contacted at 212-374-6888 to request representation from Corporation Counsel.

VI. **INQUIRIES**

Inquiries regarding this regulation should be addressed to:

Borough Integrated Service Center/CFN  
Network that supports the school.

NOTE: This document may be modified to require additional information based upon the unique circumstances of a particular trip.

**PARENT NOTIFICATION/CONSENT FORM**

**DAY TRIP**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

School (list additional trip sponsors when applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Trip Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Trip Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Return Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Return Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Mode of Transportation: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Clothing/Equipment Required for this Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

This trip will include the following physical and sports activities: \_\_\_\_\_

I, the parent/guardian of the student named above, hereby give my permission for my child to take part in the school trip described above.

a) I understand that there are potential risks associated with the above-listed activities and I consent to my child's participation in all activities except for the following:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b) Please indicate below any permanent or temporary medical or other condition including special dietary and medication needs, or the need for visual or auditory aids, which should be known about your child:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c) I understand that as a parent, if I believe it is necessary to limit my child's activity to a great extent, then the school may not be able to accommodate my child on this trip and that I and my child will be informed of this decision as soon as possible upon the receipt by the school of this completed consent form.

d) I agree that in the event of an emergency injury or illness, the staff member(s) in charge of the trip may act on my behalf and at my expense in obtaining medical treatment for my child.

e) I understand that my child is expected to behave responsibly and to follow the school's discipline code and policies.

- f) I agree and understand that I am responsible for the actions of my child, and I release the school from all claims and liabilities that arise in connection with the trip, except if due to the negligence of school officials.
- g) I understand that I am responsible for getting my child to and from the departure and return sites identified above. I understand that my child shall be accompanied by staff member(s) during the trip, including while traveling from the departure site to the destination site, and from the destination site to the return site.
- h) I understand that alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs are prohibited and have discussed this prohibition with my child. I understand that if my child is found in possession of these substances, he/she will be subject to school disciplinary procedures and possible criminal prosecution.
- i) I understand that students who violate the school's discipline code may be excluded in the future by the school from participating in a trip.
- j) In an emergency I can be reached at: Day: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Contact: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_
- k) I give my permission for my child to participate in this school trip.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**STUDENT DECLARATION**

(to be signed by Middle School and High School students)

I have read this form and I understand that I am to act on this trip in the same responsible manner in which I am expected to conduct myself in school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Student)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

NOTE: This document may be modified to require additional information based upon the unique circumstances of a particular trip.

**PARENT NOTIFICATION/CONSENT FORM**  
**OVERNIGHT/EXTENDED DAY TRIP**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

School (list additional trip sponsors when applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Trip Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Trip Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Return Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Return Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Mode of Transportation: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Clothing/Equipment Required for this Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

This trip will include the following physical and sports activities: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I, the parent/guardian of the student named above, hereby give my permission for my child to take part in the school trip described above.

a) I understand that there are potential risks associated with the above-listed activities and I consent to my child's participation in all activities except for the following:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b) Please indicate below any permanent or temporary medical or other condition including special dietary and medication needs, or the need for visual or auditory aids, which should be known about your child:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c) I understand that as a parent, if I believe it is necessary to limit my child's activity to a great extent, then the school may not be able to accommodate my child on this trip and that I and my child will be informed of this decision as soon as possible upon the receipt by the school of this completed consent form.

d) I agree that in the event of an emergency injury or illness, the staff member(s) in charge of the trip may act on my behalf and at my expense in obtaining medical treatment for my child.

e) I am responsible for getting my child to and from the departure and return sites identified above. I understand that my child shall be accompanied by staff member(s) while traveling from the departure site to the destination site, and from the destination site to the return site.

- f) I understand that it is within the school's discretion to change travel, accommodations and other arrangements as it deems necessary. I will be informed of such changes as soon as practicable.
- g) I understand that the school in arranging for my child's travel and accommodation selected commercial airlines, trains, restaurants, hotels and other services whose performance and service cannot be controlled by the school. Consequently the school is not responsible for the actions of these commercial entities, including but not limited to lost luggage, unsatisfactory quarters, and refunds.
- h) I understand that my child is expected to behave responsibly and to follow the school's discipline code and policies.
- i) I agree and understand that I am responsible for the actions of my child, and I release the school from all claims and liabilities that arise in connection with the trip, except if due to the negligence of school officials.
- j) I understand that students who violate the school's discipline code may be excluded by the school from participating in a trip. Additionally, I understand that if a serious or reported violation occurs while on the trip, it is within the school's discretion to send my child home from the program, of which I will be informed. I understand if my child is sent home early, I am responsible for all costs associated with such early departure and forfeit any monies paid that are not refunded to the school.
- k) I understand that students who violate the school's discipline code may be excluded by the school from participating in a trip.
- l) In an emergency I can be reached at: Day: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Contact: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_
- m) I give my permission for my child to participate in this school trip.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**STUDENT DECLARATION**

(to be signed by Middle School and High School students)

I have read this form and I understand that I am to act on this trip in the same responsible manner in which I am expected to conduct myself in school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Student)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

NOTE: This document may be modified to require additional information based upon the unique circumstances of a particular trip. This consent form does not apply to trips involving students staying with host families.

**PARENT NOTIFICATION/CONSENT FORM**  
**INTERNATIONAL TRIP**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**If your child does not have a United States passport, please contact the trip coordinator. Foreign countries have different rules regarding visas and permits for non-United States passport travelers.**

School (list additional trip sponsors when applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Trip Date(s): \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Trip Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Return Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Return Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Mode of Transportation: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Carrier: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Clothing/Equipment Required for this Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

This trip will include the following physical and sports activities: \_\_\_\_\_

I, the parent/guardian of the student named above, hereby give my permission for my child to take part in the trip to \_\_\_\_\_, described above.

a) I understand that there are potential risks associated with the above-listed activities and I consent to my child's participation in all activities except for the following:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b) Please indicate below any permanent or temporary medical or other condition including special dietary and medication needs, or the need for visual or auditory aids, which should be known about your child:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c) I understand that as a parent, if I believe it is necessary to limit my child's activity to a great extent, then the school may not be able to accommodate my child on this trip and that I and my child will be informed of this decision as soon as possible upon the receipt by the school of this completed consent form.

d) I agree that in the event of an emergency injury or illness, the staff member(s) in charge of the trip may act on my behalf and at my expense in obtaining medical treatment for my child.

e) I am responsible for getting my child to and from the departure and return site identified above. I understand that my child shall be accompanied by staff member(s) during the trip, including while traveling from the departure site to the destination site, and from the destination site to the return site.

- f) I understand that it is within the school's discretion to change travel, accommodations and other arrangements as it deems necessary. I will be informed of such changes as soon as practicable.
- g) I understand that the school in arranging for my child's travel and accommodation selected commercial airlines, trains, restaurants, hotels and other services whose performance and service cannot be controlled by the school. Consequently, the school is not responsible for the actions of these commercial entities, including but not limited to lost luggage, unsatisfactory quarters, and refunds.
- h) I understand that my child is expected to behave responsibly and to follow the school's discipline code and policies.
- i) I agree and understand that I am responsible for the actions of my child, and I release the school from all claims and liabilities that arise in connection with the trip, except if due to the negligence of school officials.
- j) I understand that students who violate the school's discipline code may be excluded by the school from participating in a trip. Additionally, I understand that if a serious or reported violation occurs while on the trip, it is within the school's discretion to send my child home from the program, of which I will be informed. I understand if my child is sent home early, I am responsible for all cost associated with such early departure and forfeit any monies paid that are not refunded to the school.
- k) In an emergency I can be reached at: Day: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Contact: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: (\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_
- l) I give my permission for my child to participate in this international school trip.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**STUDENT DECLARATION**

(to be signed by Middle School and High School students)

I have read this form and I understand that I am to act on this trip in the same responsible manner in which I am expected to conduct myself in school. I accept the rules and regulations set forth by the school and the Department of Education for international programs. I will obey the rules and regulations of the foreign country. I agree to accept the travel conditions selected by the school. I will participate in the pre-orientation and post-orientation programs provided by the school and the Department of Education. I understand that alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs of any and all kinds are strictly prohibited and that if I am found in possession of these substances, I will be subject to school disciplinary procedures and possible criminal prosecution.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Student)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

