



## CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

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### Board Policy Statement

#### 6153.00 - Field Trips

Approved on February 5, 2024

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#### **I. Field Trips**

The Board of Education recognizes that field trips for students when properly planned, executed, evaluated, and used as a device for teaching and learning, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of the District/school.

For purposes of this policy, a field trip is defined as any journey by a group of students away from the school premises, under the supervision of a teacher, which is an integral part of an approved course of study, cocurricular activity or class trip and conducted for the purpose of affording a first-hand educational experience not available in the classroom or school.

The value of field trips is directly related to the orientation and preparation of the students by their teacher(s) prior to the trip and the care with which the teacher(s) uses follow-up activities upon the student's return.

#### **II. Types of Field Trips**

The District recognizes the following types of field trips. All trips are subject to final approval of the building principal, superintendent and Board of Education, if necessary (see Section III - Approval of Field Trips).

##### **1. School Sponsored Educational Field Trips**

School sponsored educational field trips should be directly related to or be an extension of classroom learning experiences. Pre-teaching, planning, and evaluation should always be part of any given field trip. This category of trips includes competitive/performance field trips by academic, athletic, (excluding regularly scheduled interscholastic athletic contests) and performing art groups participating in competition or performance.

##### **2. School Sponsored Recreational Field Trips**

School groups may plan trips for recreational purposes. They are subject to final approval of the Building Principal, Superintendent, and Board of Education (if deemed necessary in this policy). Participation may be limited to the members of the sponsoring organization. Such trips are offered on a voluntary basis and are designed as a social activity.

##### **3. School Sponsored Cultural/Enrichment Field Trips**

School groups may plan trips for cultural/enrichment purposes. They are subject to final approval of the Building Principal and Superintendent, if necessary (see Approval of Field Trips).

#### **4. Trips Unrelated to the District**

The Board of Education cannot accept responsibility for non-school sponsored trips/tours. Individuals who plan trips/tours that are not school sponsored must alert parents and students that the planned trip is not associated with the Consolidated School District of New Britain. The trip planners must clearly indicate in writing that they are serving as private agents or private individuals. No school materials may be used for letters to parents, directions or other communications.

### **III. Approvals of Field Trips**

All school sponsored field trips require administrative approval.

- For all trips within the State of Connecticut, requests must be submitted a minimum of 10 school days in advance of the departure date to the building administrator. Field trips must be approved by the superintendent or designee.
- All out-of-state field trips require the approval of the Superintendent of Schools 60 days in advance of the departure date.
- All foreign travel field trips must be submitted a minimum of one calendar year in advance of the departure date for initial Superintendent approval and Board of Education for final approval. No fundraising or advertising activities related to the trip may be conducted prior to initial Superintendent approval. Between 90 and 120 days in advance of the departure date, the sponsoring staff member must request a meeting with the Superintendent to gain final approval. The purpose of this two-step process to ensure that conditions of safety and security in the destination country have not changed since the initial approval.
- Superintendent approval of all field trips shall be conditional. Approval for any field trip may be revoked at any time by the Superintendent or Building Principal if a change in circumstances, whether man-made or natural, would warrant cancellation in the interest of safety of the students or staff.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for obtaining trip cancellation insurance. This is strongly recommended. The Board of Education is not responsible to refund students for canceled trips or to pursue reimbursement from travel agents or trip insurance carriers, under any circumstances.
- Before funds are solicited or collected, all field trips must be approved by the appropriate designee, as described in this section.

### **IV. Optional Considerations:**

- Any trips involving swimming must receive special approval from the Superintendent and must be signed off by the student's parent/guardian.
- Parents/guardians who feel their child should not participate may deny permission and arrangements will be made for the child to remain at school on the day of the trip.

- Use of privately-owned vehicles or leased vans to transport students to and from field trips is strictly prohibited, except in the case of a bona fide emergency. Determination of a bona fide emergency will be made by the field trip leader if the Superintendent or Principal is not present or available or not possible to contact. Staff and parents/guardians who use their own vehicles risk being legally liable for any injury a student sustains while in the vehicle.
- Chaperones on school sponsored trips will be covered for liability purposes by the school district policies.
- The administration, with the Superintendent's approval, reserves the right to deny the participation for any student on any overnight field trip based upon a record of inappropriate behavior and/or poor attendance pattern.

#### **V. Costs of Field Trips**

Students may be assessed for the cost of field trips which includes transportation, lodging, meals, and entry fees. Fundraising activities (following District policies) may be used to defray the cost of a field trip. When the cost is considerable, a discreet arrangement can be made with the administrator for the possible assistance in payment for those individuals experiencing a hardship.

#### **VI. Additional Considerations**

This policy does not apply to regular interscholastic athletic games/competitions, as that schedule is developed by the Athletic Director in conjunction with the administration. Any trips by athletic teams beyond the regular interscholastic schedule must be approved in accordance with this policy. The acceptance of any gratuities, discounts and/or gifts for personal use resulting from field trips is prohibited.

Any gifts, gratuities, or promotional items provided by travel companies will become the property of the District and will be used for the benefit of the trip or the school.

The Superintendent shall establish regulations/procedures for the review and approval of field trips. These procedures shall address the process for prior screening, evaluating and approving field trips. All reasonable steps are to be taken to ensure the safety of participants. Additionally, the procedures should require prior Building Principal approval of all field trips, and prior approval of the Superintendent. Furthermore, the procedures shall establish assurances that

- All students have parental/guardian permission for trips
- All trips are properly supervised, all safety precautions are observed
- All trips contribute substantially to the educational program
- All trips are funded by the District (or funding is addressed in the planning)
- All safety precautions are observed

For overnight trips and with advance notice to parents/guardians, students' luggage/baggage may be searched prior to or at any point during the trip to ensure safety and compliance with all Board of Education policies regarding prohibited items.

For overnight trip room assignments: Students will be assigned roommates based on gender/gender identity, preference and/or best fit. If a student attending an overnight trip prefers an individual room for any reason, they may submit such request to the district [CHOOSE ONE: when filling out their room preference form OR by DATE]. Once requested, single rooms will be assigned based on availability. Depending on the costs charged by the lodging facility, the students' family may incur an additional cost for a single room. The district will provide each

family with the names of students who have been assigned to room with their child, but additional information regarding other students will remain confidential, in accordance with state and federal law.

### **Legal References/Citations**

Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 10-220 and 10-221



## CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

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### **Administrative Procedure**

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All field trip requests are to be reviewed and approved in accordance with this policy and procedure. Approval for field trips must be obtained in writing, in advance, on the application for field trips as follows:

- Within State: Principal, Director of Instruction or Designee
- Outside of State: Principal, Superintendent
- Any overnight trip: Principal, Superintendent
- International trips: Superintendent

The following procedures must be followed by the teacher in conducting an approved field trip.

#### **I. Pre-Planning**

##### **A. Notification**

- a. The teacher/sponsor must check with the principal before involving students and/or parents in planning.
- b. Where students' contributions are requested, the teacher/sponsor shall present a proposal regarding what fund sources will be used or fund-raising activities planned to provide for students unable to meet costs.

##### **B. Knowledge of Location to be visited**

- a. The teacher/sponsor will visit or be familiar with the site of the trip before the trip is taken.
- b. If the teacher/sponsor is unable to comply with #1 above, the teacher/sponsor will consult with other staff members who have been at the field trip location to obtain specific information as to the educational value and safety of the location for students of the grade level involved.

##### **C. Statement of Purpose**

- a. A field trip application, indicating the objectives of the trip and its relationship to the curriculum, shall be submitted to the principal by the teacher/sponsor. This statement must clearly note that the trip is an integral part of the curriculum.

- b. The principal shall review the statement of purpose before recommending the trip for approval.

#### **D. Safety Provisions**

- a. Knowledge of Possible Hazards

- i. The teacher/sponsor must make inquiry as to any potential hazards so that the safety and well-being of trip participants can be secured. The teacher/sponsor must inform the principal of such hazards.
- ii. Potentially hazardous activities (including skiing, mountain climbing, scuba diving, air or sea travel, etc.) may require special insurance arrangements. Such activities shall be pointed out to parents before the trip is taken. In case of doubt, the principal shall review planned activities with the Superintendent or designee.

- b. Knowledge of Students' Medical Problems

- i. Prior to the trip teachers shall contact the school nurse to determine special medical problems, allergies, handicaps, special prescriptions, etc., of students going on a field trip. It is the responsibility of the teacher to make any appropriate arrangements to accommodate a student's special medical condition.
- ii. The teacher should plan emergency measures which will be taken if a medical emergency arises.

#### **E. Transportation**

- a. Principals or the teacher/sponsor shall make travel arrangements when the regular school bus carrier is involved.
- b. School buses, charter or some other form of public carrier is the preferred form of travel. Bus trips sponsored and paid for by the School District are to be scheduled with the School District's contracted transportation company. All reservations must be made through the Pupil Accounting Office.

#### **F. Notification to Parent**

- a. Before the student is allowed to participate, permission slips should be obtained from the parent or guardian of each student participant. Permission slips shall be taken on the trip by the teacher/sponsor and retained for at least a six-month period after completion of the trip by the building.
- b. Information given by the teacher on the permission slip should include: (a) the purpose of the trip, (b) the place to be visited, (c) the date and approximate times of the departure from and the arrival back at the school, (d) the type of transportation to be used, (e) the total cost, if any, (f) a release to seek emergency medical attention as needed, (g) any required apparel or equipment needed, (h) special medical conditions of the student, and (i) the possibility that a field trip may be cancelled without reimbursement and parents/guardians may wish to consider purchasing travel insurance.

- c. Standard permission slip guides will be available at each school office. Modifications may be made to accommodate special circumstances for particular trips.
- d. It should be noted that a parent or guardian does not waive any legal rights when signing a permission slip.
- e. A detailed and timely itinerary should be sent to parents for all trips out of New Britain.

#### **G. Notification to Cafeteria Personnel**

- a. If a trip will cause students to miss lunch at school, the teacher/sponsor shall notify cafeteria personnel at least five (5) school days in advance of the number of students that will be absent on the specific date.

#### **H. Preparation of Students**

- a. The teacher/sponsor shall acquaint the students with the purpose of the trip and related learning objectives.
- b. Where possible, the teacher/sponsor shall involve students in the actual planning for the trip.
- c. The teacher/sponsor shall inform the students as to what is expected of them in the way of behavior and dress and of what materials they may take with them.

### **II. Procedures on the Trip**

#### **A. Supervision**

- a. Teachers, administrators and other adults acting as chaperones are expected to exercise supervisory responsibilities.
- b. Supervisory personnel must be continuously alert so as reasonably to anticipate possible hazards.
- c. Visitor guides should be used if available and suitable
- d. Adult chaperones (e.g. other staff personnel, parents, etc.) may accompany the group and should be briefed by the teacher/sponsor as to purpose of the trip, possible hazards, procedures, supervisory responsibilities, etc., shall receive a copy of these procedures.

- B.** Per Board policy, all overnight trips must be approved by the Superintendent of Schools prior to the trip. In those cases, the names and ages of all chaperones must accompany the request for approval submitted to the Superintendent of Schools.

- C. The following ratios are suggested as to approximate proportion of adult chaperones inclusive of the teacher/sponsor, to students in terms of grade level:

K-3	1 Adult : 5 Students
4-6	1 Adult : 8 Students
7-5	1 Adult : 10 Students
9-12	1 Adult : 15 Students

Names of chaperones shall be placed on record in the principal's office prior to the trip.

- D. Chaperones shall be appraised of their responsibilities by the teacher/sponsor.
- E. Students shall be informed of their obligation to adhere to the directions of the teacher/sponsor and chaperones.
- F. Students shall demonstrate equal respect for the teacher in charge and for adults serving as chaperones. Students engaging in objectionable deportment will be reported to the principal by the teacher in charge subsequent to return from the field trip. The principal will take disciplinary measures, as he/she deems appropriate. The regular school disciplinary policy (Board Policy 3-3) is in effect on all field trips.
- G. The teacher/sponsor must notify the building principal if students are to be delayed or if the itinerary is substantially changed for extended trips.
- H. Should any accidents or medical emergencies occur, the teacher must seek medical assistance immediately and notify the principal. Parents will be contacted by the principal.
- I. Groups and Individual Activities – On the Trip
- Adequate time should be allowed for lunch (or dinner) during the field trip.
  - Time should be allowed for toilet and washroom purposes.
  - While on a school-sponsored field trip students are under the authority and responsibility of the school until they return to the school. Each students shall remain with the group until return to school, provided, however, with the permission of teacher/sponsor in charge of the trip, a student may, if circumstances so warrant, or in the case of an emergency, be released to a parent, legal guardian, or an adult designated in writing by such parent or legal guardian.
- J. Educational Activities
- Every effort shall be made to insure optimum learning by students on the trip.
  - Activities should take place in the classroom before and after the field trip, which enhance the field experience.

## **K. Adult Behavior**

- a. Adults, teachers, and chaperones shall, at all times, conduct themselves in such a way as to demonstrate the best example to students.
- b. Ordinarily, adults shall stay with the group at all times.
- c. Smoking, use of alcoholic beverages or any illicit substance is prohibited during the field trip. The prohibition extends to all students, teacher/sponsors and chaperones.

## **III. Follow-up Activities**

### **A. Reports**

- a. As soon as possible after the trip, the teacher/sponsor shall make a written report to the principal as to its success.
- b. If transportation or other details arranged by the principal have proven to be unsatisfactory, the teacher/sponsor shall so report to the principal for follow-up and correction for the next similar trip.
- c. If an accident or medical emergency has occurred during the trip, the teacher/sponsor shall immediately furnish the principal with complete written details as to apparent cause and effects and as to what actions were taken by teacher/sponsor.

### **B. Educational**

- a. At the first opportunity, the teacher/sponsor shall review the stated purposes of the trip and observations made on the trip with the group.
- b. Appropriate communications expressing gratitude to those who hosted the group during the field trip are encouraged.

## **IV. Non-School Sponsored Trips**

The Board of Education will not accept responsibility for trips, which are not properly approved in accordance with this Policy. Non-school sponsored trips planned for profit by staff members shall not occur on school time and therefore, are not to be planned in school time. ("Profit" is defined as monetary gain in excess of expenses). The facilities of the schools may not be used in planning such trips. Letters to parents, directions or other communications may not be duplicated on school equipment or distributed at schools.