

**BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**DATE:** May 11, 2004  
**TO:** **BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**FROM:** Dr. J. Hairston, Superintendent  
**SUBJECT:** **FIELD TRIP AND FOREIGN TRAVEL RULE 6104**  
**ORIGINATOR:** Christine Johns, Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction  
**RESOURCE PERSON(S):** Phyllis Bailey, Executive Director of Special Programs, PreK-12

**INFORMATION**

That Field Trip and Foreign Travel Rule 6104 is presented to the Board of Education as an information item. The changes made to Rule 6104 are related to students with disabilities having equal opportunity to participate in all planned educational and recreational field trip activities, including transportation to and from the field trip site(s).

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## INSTRUCTION

### **Field Trips and Foreign Travel**

#### 1. Definitions

- A. “Field trip” is a school-approved trip, off the premises of the school. A field trip does not include an inter-scholastic competition, unless the competition requires overnight or foreign travel.
1. “Day field trip” is a trip that occurs during the student school day. A day field trip may include in-state or out-of-state travel.
  2. “Extended day field trip” is a trip that occurs before and/or extends beyond the student school day. An extended day field trip may include in-state or out-of-state travel.
  3. “Overnight field trip” is a trip that involves an overnight stay away from home. An overnight field trip may occur in-state or out-of-state, but not outside of the United States.
  4. “Foreign travel” is any trip or portion of a trip that is taken outside of the United States.
- B. A “non-school sponsored trip” is a trip that involves school students and/or school personnel, but is not sponsored by the school or the school system.
- C. Responsible Adult Participants
1. “Sponsoring teacher” is a certificated employee of the Board of Education of Baltimore County who accompanies and supervises students on the trip. The sponsoring teacher is in charge of planning and implementation of the trip. The sponsoring teacher ensures compliance with the policies of the Board of Education and the Superintendent’s rules.
  2. “Chaperone” is a person, other than the sponsoring teacher, aged 21 or older, who accompanies and supervises students on a field trip.

2. General Requirements for Field Trips
  - A. All school-approved field trips must be designed to support and extend classroom instruction. They must be clearly aligned to and a logical outgrowth of the Essential Curriculum. They must be accompanied by certificated school system personnel, and they must be approved by the principal and other appropriate personnel as provided in this rule.
  - B. Field trips should be planned to provide for the safety, comfort, and protection of students and of the responsible adult participants.
  - C. Students shall not be denied access to day, extended day, or overnight field trip opportunities because of disability or economic status. Efforts shall be made to find ways to maximize participation by interested and qualified students in these field trips. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES MUST BE PROVIDED EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION, INCLUDING TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE DESTINATION, AND ALL PLANNED EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES THAT TAKE PLACE AT THE FIELD TRIP SITE (S). AS PART OF THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS, STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES SHOULD BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE WITH STUDENTS WITHOUT DISABILITIES TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT APPROPRIATE TO THE NEEDS OF ANY STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY. FOR THIS PURPOSE, THE STUDENT'S IEP SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO STAFF COORDINATING AND PARTICIPATING IN THESE FIELD TRIP OPPORTUNITIES.
  - D. Students who do not participate in field trips shall not be penalized in any manner. Appropriate educational experiences shall be provided for those students who do not participate in the field trip.
  - E. The principal shall monitor the scheduling and the involvement of teachers and students to make certain that neither instructional time nor school resources are unduly compromised by multiple field trips during a single school year.
  - F. Board Policy 5550, *Students: Conduct – Disruptive Behavior*; and Policy 5560, *Students: Conduct – Suspension or Expulsion*, as outlined in the *Student Handbook, Baltimore County Public Schools*, and all other Board policies, Superintendent's rules, and school instructions remain in effect at all times during the field trip.

- G. Each employee of the Board of Education who participates in a field trip or foreign travel is responsible for avoiding conflicts of interest arising from the field trip. Employees should review Board Policies 8363, *Ethics Code: Conflict of Interest*, and 8362, *Ethics Code: Gifts*, before taking part in a field trip.
  - H. Transportation for trips may be provided by private or public carriers, teachers, and/or chaperones.
    - 1. Before hiring a public carrier, the sponsoring teacher should consult the approved list issued by the Office of Transportation to select an approved, certified public carrier.
    - 2. If private transportation is used, parents and guardians should be notified by the sponsoring teacher that the liability insurance of the private driver is the primary liability coverage.
  - I. Written permission for the field trip, specifying transportation arrangements, and requesting pertinent health information, shall be obtained from parents or guardians prior to the trip. If the trip is rescheduled, the school shall obtain written permission again.
  - J. The permission form shall state: “The Board of Education shall not be financially liable for losses due to changes or cancellation of field trips.”
3. Additional Particular Requirements By Category of Trips
- 1. Extended Day Field Trips – For Grades 3 and below, the planned return to school should not be later than 6:00 p.m. when school is in session the next day. For Grades 4 and higher, the planned return to school should not be later than 9:00 p.m. when school is in session the next day. Before departing, the sponsoring teacher must ensure that arrangements have been made for students’ transportation home. Upon return to the school, the sponsoring teacher must provide supervision until all children participating in the field trip have been picked up or until the previous arrangements for dismissal, (e.g., Dismissal to after-school care) have been accomplished.
  - 2. Overnight Field Trip – An overnight field trip shall involve no more than three days in which school is in session. Exceptions to

this time limitation may only be approved by the Superintendent or a designee.

3. Foreign Travel – Foreign travel shall involve no more than three days in which school is in session. Exceptions to this time limitation may only be approved by the Superintendent or a designee.
4. A non-school sponsored trip is not sanctioned by Baltimore County Public Schools. A non-school sponsored trip shall not be promoted or planned during the regular school day. School personnel participating in the planning and promotion must notify student participants and their parents or guardians that the trip is not school sponsored and that the Board of Education is not liable for losses incurred as a result of the trip. Students absent due to participating in a non-school sponsored trip should be coded as unlawfully absent.

4. General Procedures

A. Day/Extended-Day and Overnight Field Trips

1. The sponsoring teacher is responsible for developing a plan that directly relates the objectives for the trip to the Essential Curriculum and/or regularly scheduled extracurricular or co-curricular program.
2. As appropriate, the sponsoring teacher shall complete either the Day/Extended Day Field Trip Proposal or the Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Proposal.
3. Proposals shall be submitted to the school principal according to the following guidelines:
  - a. Day/Extended Day Field Trip Proposal shall be submitted 20 days prior to departure.
  - b. Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Proposal shall be submitted 60 days prior to departure.
4. Day/Extended Day Field Trip Proposals shall be approved according to the procedure established by each school, consistent with the requirements of this rule, and shall include the signature

of the principal. For day/extended day field trips involving out of state travel, the signature of the appropriate Executive Director of Schools is also required.

5. Once the Day/Extended Day Field Trip Proposal has been approved, forms should be completed as follows:
  - a. By the teacher and chaperone:
    - (1) Field Trip Planning Timeline
    - (2) Chaperone Agreement Form.
  - b. By the student and/or parent/guardian:
    - (1) Day/Extended Day Field Trip parent/guardian permission form.
6. Overnight field trips shall be considered approved when signatures are obtained in the following order:
  - a. Principal's approval
  - b. Curriculum supervisor's validation
  - c. Executive Director of Schools' approval
  - d. Approval of the Executive Director of Special Programs, PreK-12.
7. Once the Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Proposal has been approved, forms shall be completed as follows:
  - a. By the teachers and chaperones:
    - (1) Field trip planning timeline
    - (2) Chaperone Agreement Form.
  - b. By the student and/or parent/guardian:
    - (1) Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Parent/Guardian permission form
    - (2) Student health history for overnight or foreign travel field trips
    - (3) If applicable, authorization to administer medications/treatments.

8. The principal shall notify the appropriate Executive Director of Schools if the principal has concerns about the safety of the trip at any time before departure.
9. The sponsoring teacher shall maintain a copy of the Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Parent/Guardian Permission Form, with emergency contact information, and student health history for overnight and foreign travel field trips for each participant for the duration of the trip. The original of these documents shall be maintained at the school.
10. The sponsoring teacher shall notify the school nurse of the field trip in sufficient time for the nurse to review the list of participants in terms of the student health information, and to develop a plan for administration of medication or medical treatment, if required.
11. Upon conclusion of the field trip, the sponsoring teacher should complete the Field Trip Final Report.
12. Copies of all completed forms shall be retained in school files until the conclusion of the school year.

B. Foreign Travel

In order to ensure that foreign travel is related to educational goals and provides the necessary safety and security for all participants, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. The sponsoring teacher shall select a reputable travel agency or travel company in consultation with the Department of Special Programs, PreK-12.
2. Proposals for foreign travel shall be submitted to the school principal at least six months prior to departure. Before submitting the proposal, the sponsoring teacher shall consult the Executive Director of Special Programs, PreK-12, to review the U.S. Department of State's public announcements regarding foreign travel to determine whether the Department has advised against travel to a location to be visited on the trip.
3. Foreign travel shall be considered approved when signatures are obtained in the following order:

- a. Principal's approval
  - b. Curriculum supervisor's validation
  - c. Executive Director of School's approval
  - d. Approval of the Executive Director of Special Programs, PreK-12.
4. Once the Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Proposal has been approved, the following forms shall be completed:
- a. By the teachers and chaperones:
    - (1) Foreign travel planning timeline
    - (2) Chaperone Agreement Form.
  - b. By the student and/or parent/guardian:
    - (1) Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Parent/Guardian Permission Form
    - (2) Student health history for overnight or foreign travel field trips
    - (3) If applicable, authorization to administer medications/treatments.
5. Pre-travel orientation session(s) shall be scheduled to inform students, chaperones, and parents/guardians about the travel plans as needed. At least one of the orientation sessions shall be mandatory for students who plan to participate and their parents/guardians. At the mandatory orientation session, the following information shall be disseminated: (A) Student behavior expectations, (Including Board Policy 5550, *STUDENTS: Conduct - Disruptive Behavior* and Policy 5560, *STUDENTS: Conduct – Suspension and Expulsion*); (B) The travel company's trip cancellation policy (if applicable), availability of travel insurance, and the refund schedule (if any); and (C) Those expenses, not included in the costs, such as required inoculations, passport/visa expenses, and personal expenses. The sponsoring teacher shall request that the travel company send a representative to the mandatory orientation session. It is highly recommended that the company representative or company materials address items (B) and (C). The sponsoring teacher shall review item (A).
6. Prior to departure, the sponsoring teacher periodically shall consult with the Executive Director of Special Programs, PreK-12, who shall have access to the U.S. Department of State's public announcement



advisories of foreign travel. If the State Department advises against travel to a country on the foreign travel itinerary, the sponsoring teacher must inform the principal. The principal or sponsoring teacher shall contact the travel company to ascertain whether the travel company intends to cancel or reroute the trip to avoid the location that is the subject of the advisory. If not, the principal shall consult with the Executive Director of Schools to determine the appropriate course of action. The principal shall notify students, parents/guardians, and the travel company of the decision immediately. In no event shall the trip actually proceed to the location that is the subject of the advisory while the advisory is in effect.

7. The sponsoring teacher shall devise a contingency plan for maintaining communications with participants in the event of an emergency during the field trip.
8. Within one week of the date of departure, the sponsoring teacher shall obtain the final approval from the Executive Director of Special Programs, PreK-12. The sponsoring teacher shall notify the school nurse of the foreign travel trip in sufficient time to review the list of participants in terms of student health information, and to develop a plan for administration of medications or medical treatment, if required.
9. The sponsoring teacher shall maintain an additional copy of the Overnight Field Trip/Foreign Travel Parent/Guardian Permission Form, with emergency contact information, and student health history for overnight or foreign travel field trips for each participant for the duration of the trip. The original of these documents shall be maintained at the school.
10. Upon conclusion of the foreign travel, the sponsoring teacher shall complete the Overnight/ Foreign Travel Final Report and submit copies to the principal and the Executive Director of Special Programs, PreK-12.
11. Copies of all completed forms shall be retained in school files until the conclusion of the school year.

Rule  
Approved: 10/10/02  
REVISED:

Superintendent of Schools