

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 196  
Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Public Schools  
Educating our students to reach their full potential

Series Number 604.7.2AR Adopted October 1977 Revised November 2017

Title Overnight Field Trips

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1. **Definition** - Overnight student field trips are school-sponsored student group trips which are an extension of classroom instruction or cocurricular programs and last for more than one day. Voluntary trips may be funded by students, the school, school-related organizations and/or non-school organizations. Required trips are funded by the school, except for students' meals.
  - 1.1 Trips that are organized and conducted by district teachers through non-school agencies and that are not approved or supported by the school or district are not covered by this policy, except insofar as Section 6.3 applies.
  - 1.2 Students who travel overnight because of advancement in academic or cocurricular competition at the sectional, state or national level do not need to complete the approval process described in section 2 below but must comply with all other aspects of the regulation. All student travel plans must be reviewed by the director of secondary education, director of elementary education or director of special education.
  - 1.3 Overnight field trips and related activities shall be conducted outside school hours as much as possible.
2. **Approval Process for Domestic Overnight Trips** - Before any promotion of a domestic overnight trip takes place, an Overnight Field Trip Request (District Procedure 604.7.2.2P) must be submitted to the school principal for review and recommendation. After review, the principal will submit the plan and his or her recommendation to the relevant director at least four (4) weeks prior to the trip, unless four weeks' notice is not possible (e.g., sectional or state tournament game), in which case the request will be submitted as soon as possible prior to the trip.
  - 2.1 The relevant director will review the request and approve or deny it.
  - 2.2 Each overnight field trip request may be approved if the provisions of this regulation (and accompanying procedures) have been complied with and:
    - 2.2.1 It offers safe and meaningful experiences and value for participants;
    - 2.2.2 There are meaningful alternative learning opportunities available for non-participants, and
    - 2.2.3 Adult supervision of at least one adult for each 15 students is provided, except when not feasible and as approved by the relevant director.
  - 2.3 Voluntary trips must be considered supplementary to the district educational program.
3. **Approval Process for International Overnight Trips** – The approval process for international trips requires submission and approval of two forms, as provided below.

- 3.1 At least 6 months prior to trip – Before any promotion of an international trip takes place, a Letter of Intent for International Field Trips (District Procedure 604.7.2.3P) must be approved.
  - 3.1.1 The Letter of Intent shall first be submitted to the school principal for review and recommendation. After review, the principal will submit the Letter of Intent and his or her recommendation to the relevant director at least six (6) months prior to the trip.
  - 3.1.2 The relevant director will review the Letter of Intent with the superintendent’s cabinet, which shall approve or deny it. Any approval is contingent on satisfactory completion and approval of the Overnight Field Trip Request (District Procedure 604.7.2.2P). Cabinet’s decision will be conveyed by the relevant director to the principal and the organizing staff person.
- 3.2 At least 4 weeks prior to trip – If the superintendent’s cabinet approves the Letter of Intent, Overnight Field Trip Request (District Procedure 604.7.2.2P) must be submitted to the school principal for review and recommendation. After review and approval, the principal will submit the request and his or her recommendation to the relevant director at least four weeks prior to the trip. The director will decide whether to approve or deny the request.
- 3.3 Sections 2.2 and 2.3 above shall also apply to international trips.
4. **Insurance** - School-sponsored trips are automatically included in the district's liability insurance coverage. There may be coverage limitations or additional requirements for international trips.
5. **Travel Agency Requirement for International Trips** – Airfare, accommodations and planned itinerary events for school-sponsored international trips must be booked through a domestic and reputable travel agency. Reputability may be evidenced by membership with the International Airlines Travel Agent Network or the American Society of Travel Agents, or by other means, such as proof of insurance and bonding. Any written agreement required by the travel agency must be approved by the district legal department prior to signature. To ensure timely legal review takes place, organizing staff must submit any written travel agency agreement to the relevant director as soon as possible, preferably with the Letter of Intent (if available at that time).
6. **Overnight Trip Participation and Parent/Guardian Permission**
  - 6.1 Students who are suspended from school shall not be permitted to attend overnight trips. In addition, school administrators may prohibit students from attending overnight trips when:
    - 6.1.2 Where applicable, preclusion from the trip is in accordance with Minnesota State High School League rules relating to misbehavior and/or ineligibility;
    - 6.1.2 The student has failed to meet school-determined eligibility criteria for participation, including reasonable behavior expectations; or
    - 6.1.3 The student has failed to secure or complete required trip paperwork (including travel documents and travel insurance, if required).

- 6.2 In addition to any other trip-specific paperwork that may be required, parents or guardians of students who participate in an approved trip will be asked to review and complete the Overnight Field Trip Expectations and Guidelines (District Procedure 604.7.2.4P), as well as Overnight Field Trip - Student Medical Treatment Information and Permission (District Procedure 604.7.2.4.1P) or International Field Trip - Student Medical Treatment Information and Permission (District Procedure 604.7.2.7P).
- 6.3 Parents or guardians of students who participate in a trip not sponsored by the district will be asked to complete a disclaimer (District Procedure 604.7.2.4.2P, Parental Disclaimer for Field Trips Not Sponsored by the District).

## **7. Arrangements, Accommodations, and Expectations**

- 7.1 Employees and adult chaperones may attend and supervise trips. Adult chaperones shall be selected by and are under the supervision of the administrator, teacher or advisor.
- 7.2 Overnight accommodations for students shall be approved by the administrator, teacher or advisor after review of appropriateness, quality, cost and student safety.
  - 7.2.1 Room arrangements shall take into consideration the age and gender of the students.
  - 7.2.2 If adult employees or chaperones share a room with students (regardless of the age of the students), there shall be no less than two adults in a room.
- 7.3 Reasonable accommodations shall be provided for students with disabilities. Organizing staff should be cognizant of students with IEPs and 504 plans and should consult in advance with parents and/or knowledgeable and appropriate staff (case managers, nurses, etc.) when they have reason to believe a student may require accommodations for all or any portion of the trip. Any provisions of IEPs or 504 plans that would apply to the trip setting must be followed.
- 7.4 Employees and chaperones may not consume alcohol or drugs (besides properly-dosaged prescribed or non-prescription medications) and are expected to adhere to professional standards of conduct at all times during overnight student trips.
- 7.5 Background checks are required for non-employee chaperones and can be completed through District 196 Human Resources.
- 7.6 Only employees who are Type III certified may drive students on trips. (See Administrative Regulation 707.12AR, Transportation of Students by Employees in a Type III (Car or Van) Vehicle.) Students shall not drive vehicles to, from or during a trip.
- 7.7 Inspections and Searches:
  - 7.7.1 Employees and chaperones shall conduct room checks every night at a designated time. Students must be in their own rooms, and must remain in their own rooms after the room check.

7.7.2 If student misconduct is suspected, only employees may carry out searches of students, rooms and/or personal property (e.g., baggage, cell phones). All searches are subject to the following conditions:

7.7.2.1 If there is a reason to believe that an illegal act or violation of school rules has been committed, or is about to be committed, employees attending the trip are authorized to search the student and her or his personal property, including baggage and cell phones, and seize any item the possession of which is specifically prohibited by law, district policies or school rules.

7.7.2.2 Searches will be limited to circumstances in which there is reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence of the suspected misconduct. The scope and/or intrusiveness of the search must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search. (Refer to Administrative Regulation 503.1AR, Searches and Interviews, for additional information.)

8. **Employee Financial Interest** - A full and public disclosure of any direct or indirect financial interest of any school employee involved in a student trip is required.
9. **International Trips Only** - Illnesses/Hospitalizations/Deaths – For student field trips involving international travel in which the district has a written agreement with the program provider, staff supervising the trip shall complete the relevant section of District Procedure 604.7.2.7P, International Field Trip – Student Medical Treatment Information and Permission, and promptly send the form to the director of secondary education if a district student 1) was hospitalized due to an accident; 2) became ill, or 3) died while participating in the international trip.
10. **Post-Trip Evaluation for International Trips** – If requested by the relevant director, after completion of an international trip, organizing staff shall provide the director a post-trip debriefing and other requested information about the trip experience, such as information about the educational outcomes and objectives achieved by the trip.
11. **Reimbursement for Expenses** – When other funds designated for the trip do not cover the cost, the district may pay for, or reimburse, reasonable expenses incurred by staff while traveling to and from, or attending school-sponsored overnight trips.
  - 11.1 Expenses which may be reimbursed include transportation/airfare, accommodations, meals and other amounts deemed “appropriate expenditures,” as defined by District Regulation 704AR.
  - 11.2 Anticipated staff expenses should be budgeted prior to the trip.
  - 11.3 A district procurement card (PCard) should be used to pay for reasonable expenses whenever possible. When use of a PCard is not feasible, expense reimbursement requests (District Procedure 405.8.3.2P) may be submitted. Such requests must be submitted with original, itemized receipts (credit card statements are insufficient) and should be submitted within 60 days after the expenses were paid or incurred to avoid the amounts being treated as taxable income, subject to income and employment taxes per IRS guidelines.

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References – MN Statute 5A.03, Subd. 2, Placing Minnesota students in travel abroad programs

- District 196 Procedure 604.7.2.2P, Overnight Field Trip Request
- District 196 Procedure 604.7.2.3P, Letter of Intent for International Field Trips
- District 196 Procedure 604.7.2.4P, Overnight Field Trip Expectations and Guidelines
- District 196 Procedure 604.7.2.4.1P, Overnight Field Trip – Student Medical Treatment Information and Permisison
- District 196 Procedure 604.7.2.7P, International Field Trip Request – Student Medical Treatment Information and Permisison