



Frederick County Public Schools
Board of Education
FIELD TRIPS
Policy 414

A. Policy Purpose

To articulate the Board of Education of Frederick County's (Board) expectations regarding the conduct of field trips as part of the overall educational experience for Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) students.

B. Definitions

1. "Chaperone" is defined to mean a parent or guardian of a participating student or another family member or a member of the community (age 21 or older) who has been approved to accompany and supervise students during the entirety of a field trip.
2. "FCPS-Sponsored" is defined to mean an activity, event, or meeting developed or organized by FCPS with the knowledge and approval of the associated principals and/or Chief of Schools and Accountability or their designee, that is under the direction and control of an authorized FCPS employee, where FCPS assumes responsibilities for the program, event, or action.
3. "Field Trip" is defined to mean a school-sponsored or FCPS-sponsored activity aligned with curricular or co-curricular program objectives and/or students' social-emotional, cultural, or leadership development.
4. "Overnight Trip" is defined to mean a Field Trip that requires overnight accommodations and may require special arrangements to be made by parents of participating students to ensure their child has transportation to and/or home from school at the beginning and/or end of the trip.
5. "Parent" is defined to mean a biological or adoptive parent, a court-appointed custodian or guardian, a foster parent, or a caregiver (as defined by the Education Article of the Maryland Annotated Code or as designated by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement).
6. "Required Field Trip" is defined to mean an educational experience that is mandatory for students to attend as part of the curriculum or course requirements, with parents being informed ahead of time about the details of the trip.
7. "School-Sponsored Activity" is defined to mean any school system activity, on or off school property, in which a student directly participates (*e.g.*, a school field trip, athletic event, or class/graduation activity) or an activity in which the student does not directly participate but represents the school or student body simply by being present (*e.g.*, a spectator at a school event).

8. “Student Organization Trip” is defined to mean an activity that offers extended opportunities related to a school-sponsored student organization, typically limited to members of the organization or club, and should be scheduled during non-instructional hours or days when classes are not in session.
9. “Study-Travel Trip” is defined to mean a Field Trip which combines instruction and travel for an extended period of time and may require special arrangements to be made by parents of participating students to ensure their child has transportation to and/or home from school at the beginning and/or end of the trip.
10. “Teacher-in-Charge” is defined to mean an FCPS employee holding a valid Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) teaching certificate/license, a Department of Defense certified Navy Junior ROTC (NJROTC) Instructor, and/or a career coach who is approved by the principal to organize a field trip, attends/supervises the field trip, and assumes responsibility for ensuring compliance with provisions of this Policy as well as the provisions of [FCPS Regulation 414-01, *Field Trips*](#) (formerly 400-05).

C. Policy Statement

1. The Board recognizes student field trips that are aligned with FCPS systemic goals engage, inspire, and enrich the educational experiences of FCPS’s students. Accordingly, the Board endorses systemically identified field trips, which may be required for some grade levels, and school-specific elective field trip opportunities when such activities serve to further enrich the essential curriculum.
2. In order to maximize benefit to students, it is the Board’s expectation that all FCPS-sponsored and/or school-sponsored trips will have direct connection to curricular or co-curricular program objectives and or students’ social-emotional, cultural, or leadership development.
3. The richness and diversity of available historical sites, cultural museums, and community facilities within reasonable distance of Frederick County schools is unrivaled. The Board believes that this richness and diversity should be available to all Frederick County students as part of a planned, sequential program clearly related to the objectives of the Frederick County essential curriculum.

D. Implementation

1. **General Requirements Applicable to All Field Trips**
 - a. All field trips require administrative approval through the process outlined in the Superintendent’s Regulation and must be directly supervised by a Teacher-In-Charge. At the principal’s discretion and in accordance with FCPS regulation, one or more chaperone may accompany and support the Teacher-In-Charge.
 - b. Field trips will align with FCPS curricular programs and/or the school system’s vision and mission.
 - c. Field trips will be conducted in accordance with FCPS rules, regulations, and/or Board

- policies related to the health, safety, and well-being of students, employees, and chaperones.
- d. Participants are expected to follow all school rules and those detailed in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
 - e. All students must have the opportunity to participate on field trips. Students with disabilities will be provided appropriate accommodations.
 - f. Students may be denied the opportunity to participate in field trips based on academic/conduct eligibility. Students serving a suspension or expulsion during any time of a planned field trip are ineligible to participate in the field trip.
 - g. The Superintendent or their designee is authorized to cancel a trip at any time. In the event a field trip is cancelled, FCPS is not responsible for any out-of-pocket expenses incurred by families.
2. **Required Field Trips.** Required field trips will be offered at no cost to the student.
3. **Elective Field Trips**
- a. Student participation in elective field trips, including overnight trips, student organization trips, and study-travel trips, shall be voluntary and students who do not participate in these activities shall not be adversely affected in terms of their course requirements, grades, or eligibility to participate in other activities of the class or group.
 - b. Elective field trips are considered school-sponsored activities if they are cooperatively planned by FCPS faculty and students and approved by the principal. All other such trips are non-school sponsored activities.
 - c. Non-school sponsored field trips are subject to the following restrictions:
 - i. Travel agencies or other organizations shall not be permitted to come into the schools for the purpose of advertising, promoting, or enrolling students for non-school sponsored field trips.
 - ii. Employees shall not, during the regular working day, participate in, advertise, promote, or enroll students for non-school sponsored field trips.
 - d. Fees may be charged for elective field trips. Every attempt must be made to hold the trip cost to a reasonable level and provide accommodations. Fundraising activities may be used to help offset the cost of the trip. Procedures for fundraising are outlined in [Board Policy 426, Fundraising in Schools](#) and [FCPS Regulation 426-01, Fundraising](#) (formerly 300-38). Students experiencing financial hardship may not be excluded from an elective field trip. If school funds are not available to support students experiencing a financial hardship who wish to attend an elective field trip, the Superintendent or the school principal shall cancel the trip.
 - e. Overnight field trips are restricted to high school students and those who have received special permission to travel overnight by the Chief of Schools and Accountability or their designee. Overnight field trips should not exceed three (3) school days unless prior approval has been obtained from the Chief of Schools and Accountability/designee.
 - f. Study-travel trips are limited to high school students and those students who are granted special permission by the Chief of Schools and Accountability/designee.
4. **International Study-Travel Trips and Exchange Programs**
- a. FCPS does not provide school-sponsored or FCPS-sponsored international travel-study

- trips or exchange programs unless expressly approved by the Superintendent or their designee.
- b. Principals and other school staff are expressly prohibited from approving such trips.
5. **Overnight Field Trips.** The comfort of all students is paramount in the decisions around overnight field trips. Maximizing students' social integration may be achieved by applying these guidelines:
 - a. Make arrangements in consultation with the student, FCPS staff, and, if supportive, any gender diverse student's parents. Be sensitive to the need to maintain the student's privacy and not disclose or require disclosure of the student's transgender or gender nonconforming status to the other students or their parents without the consent of the transgender or gender nonconforming student and/or the student's parent.
 - b. Allow students the opportunity to room with others according to their gender identity.
 - c. Make efforts to accommodate any student who desires greater privacy; however, no student should be isolated.
 6. The Superintendent is directed to provide a regulation(s) to establish a process for planning, obtaining approval for, and conducting approved field trips, including FCPS-sponsored or school-sponsored trips.

E. Related Information

1. **Board Policy**
 - a. [Policy 426, Fundraising in Schools](#)
 - b. [Policy 443, Ensuring Inclusive School Environments for Transgender and Gender Diverse Students](#)
 - c. [Policy 444, Educational Equity and Excellence](#)
2. **FCPS Regulations**
 - a. [Regulation 426-01, Fundraising](#) formerly (300-38)
 - b. [Regulation 443-01, Creating Welcoming and Affirming Schools for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students](#) (formerly 400-36)
 - c. [Regulation 400-42, Weather Guidelines for Outside Activities](#)
 - d. [Regulation 414-01, Field Trips](#) (formerly 400-05)
 - e. [Regulation 500-33, School Supplies/Materials and Instructional Fees](#)
3. **FCPS Resources**
 - a. [Student Code of Conduct](#)
4. **Maryland Statutes**
 - a. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 7-305](#)

F. Policy History (Maintained by Legal Services)

<i>Responsible Office</i>	Department of System Accountability and School Administration
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Adoption Dates	07/12/06
Review Dates	
Revision Dates	03/12/25; 12/10/25