

Instruction

Educational Tours

Staff members may conduct educational tours, within or outside the District, the State of Connecticut or the United States, for the students or employees, or both, of any school or schools within the District. Such tour/trip is subject to District approval. Approval shall be based upon the educational relevancy to the proposed trip/tour.

Any approved trip/tour by the Board of Education (Board) to a destination outside of the United States shall be subject to U.S. State Department and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention travel advisories. In addition, any Board approved international student travel trip/tour requires registration of the trip with the local U.S. Embassy via the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

Foreign travel trips utilizing a tour company shall have the contract reviewed by the Board's attorney in advance of signing to ensure that it satisfies school Board policy and provides sufficient protection against liability. The District's policies shall apply, in addition to tour company requirements.

No student or employee may participate in such a tour unless he/she has accident and health insurance coverage protecting against bodily injury, disability or death while participating in the tour. Each student participating in the tour must provide an Emergency Treatment waiver signed by the parent or guardian to include emergency phone numbers and hospital insurance policy number and/or other data deemed necessary to implement this policy. Participation is dependent on meeting the deadline to visit a certified travel clinic, verification from a physician that student is fit for international travel, and compliance with district medication policy. School funds may not be used for any expenditure incurred on such a tour.

Employees entering into contracts or agreements with commercial agencies, without formal District approval, do so at their own risk. As such, any activity trip not approved by the Board is considered a private venture. The Board shall not be a co-sponsor of any such trip. Any distributed materials for such trips/tours must expressly and prominently state: "This program is not sponsored or endorsed by the Newtown School District." This disclaimer should appear on each item of tour/trip literature. The tour operator and/or the teacher sponsoring such trip shall acknowledge in writing to the Board that the trip/tour is not school or District sponsored or endorsed.

(cf. 1140 – Distribution of Materials to and by Students)

(cf. 1324 – Fundraising)

(cf. 1330 – Use of School Facilities)

(cf. 3515 – Community Use of School Facilities)

(cf. 6153 – Field Trips)

Policy adopted: June 4, 2024

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Educational Tours

School Sponsored Tours

1. Administrative approval for the tour must be based upon educational relevancy. Requests for such trips shall include the essential outcomes/educational standards for the trip.
2. All school District policies, including those pertaining to student conduct shall apply to international student travel.
3. The District Central Office will review the District Insurance with the insurance carrier to determine adequacy.
4. The participants on the tour, employees, and students, must show evidence of accident and health insurance. The Principal will have on file the documents which indicate that each participant of the tour has insurance and include the policy numbers when necessary.
5. Participation is dependent on meeting the deadline to visit a certified travel clinic, verification from a physician that student is fit for international travel, and compliance with the district medication policy.
6. The students and adults participating in the tour must be responsible for their own travel expenses and living expenses while on the tour. No school funds or educational funds will be utilized for any expenses incurred on such tours.
7. The Principal will be responsible to see that all Board of Education policies and administrative procedures are followed.
8. The Principal will be responsible for reviewing tours and will forward a recommendation concerning all suggested tours to the Superintendent for review.
9. Any tour out of the country shall then be forwarded to the Board of Education by the Superintendent with a recommendation for Board of Education consideration and possible approval. The recommendation will take into account any foreign travel warnings or cautions issued by the U.S. State Department.
10. Pre-approval in writing from the District's insurance company must be obtained by the District prior to departure.
11. A mandatory information meeting with students and their parents/guardians shall be held prior to the initiation of the tour. Parents and students shall be provided with information concerning the purpose and destination of the trip, transportation and eating arrangements, date and time of departure, estimated time of return, and a detailed itinerary. In addition, students and parents will be provided with the cost of the trip and the payment schedule.
12. Adequate supervision, based on the number of students and the travel involved, shall be provided by the District as directed by the Superintendent or his/her designee. This will include a minimum of two chaperones, ideally of different genders.
13. Chaperones shall be trained, as deemed necessary.
14. School District staff shall review acceptable standards of conduct with the students in advance of the trip/tour.

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Educational Tours

School Sponsored Tours (continued)

15. Student safety will be a primary consideration. School District staff sponsoring international student travel shall ensure chaperones and student participants register their travel with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) associated with the applicable US Embassy or Embassies. In the event an incident occurs requiring assistance from the US Embassy, the applicable District administrator incident commander will be notified.
16. All trip documents, signed medical disclosures and releases, etc., shall be retained at least until the expiration of the statute of limitations for filing a claim.
17. Permission forms and medical forms are to be reviewed by the Board's attorney.
18. Procedures are to be established for collecting pertinent health information including medical/prescription needs and for addressing students' health needs and any constraints, including food allergies that might impact a student's ability to fully participate or keep up with the group's planned activities.
19. The tour company's contract is to be reviewed by the Board's attorney, prior to signature. All district policies shall apply, in addition to tour company requirements.

Non School Sponsored Tours

1. The District does not sponsor, provide, or facilitate non-school-sponsored international travel.
2. School District employees must not participate in or make arrangements for international travel involving District students that appear to be school sponsored.