

**IFCB-R Field Trips**

7/20/23

**RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:**

A field trip is defined as a planned educational experience away from the school campus at any time of day directly related to and correlated with a particular unit of study or a specialized function of the school such as club functions or other school activities. The Superintendent is authorized to approve the use of school buses for field trips and to delegate approval for the use of the vehicles for these purposes to appropriate personnel in the transportation department.

**RULE:**

School personnel should be familiar with the Field Trip Procedures Manual.

The following regulations and procedures shall be observed regarding field trips:

**A. GENERAL PROVISIONS:**

1. Local schools scheduling field trips must follow all regulations and comply with pertinent administrative procedures for the implementation of the District's rules relative to such trips.
2. County buses shall be made available for educational field trips within the county and other sites as designated by the regulations. Local schools will be billed for the cost of the field trip.
3. Instructional field trips shall not be authorized during the first ten (10) school days nor the last five (5) days of the school year. This restriction does not apply to after-school activities.
4. Teachers, working with school administrators, have the authority to exclude the participation of students whose behavioral history suggests the possibility that they may endanger themselves or others while on a field trip. This decision must be made on actual student behavior and not based on disability identification.
5. Rules relative to pupil safety and behavior will be enforced.
6. Fees cannot be charged for field trips or activities related to a state-funded course as a condition of full participation or credit in the course. Donations may be requested for field trips that do not allow fees to be charged.
7. Fees may be charged for a course-related enhancement or enrichment activity provided the activity is outside the school day and does not affect credit in the course. Fees may also be charged for any extracurricular field trip. All field trips must be made available to any student meeting the criteria to participate, including students with special needs, but participation may be made contingent on payment of any applicable fees.
8. Only students who are regularly enrolled in the school district, meet field trip specific criteria, and who are involved in the instructional activity will be eligible to participate in a field trip.
9. Field trip participation rosters must be finalized 24 hours before the field trip departs.

**B. PROCESS TO APPLY FOR PERMISSION TO TAKE A FIELD TRIP:**

1. Requests for field trips shall originate with the staff member sponsoring the trip and be submitted for approval through the Field Trip Management System (FTMS) by the principal or athletic director. Local school personnel will provide specific instructions concerning how to submit a field trip request to their staff.
2. All trips, no matter what type or what method of transportation is used, must be submitted through FTMS to be properly covered by liability insurance coverage by the district.

3. Requests for single day trips must be submitted in the FTMS fifteen (15) school days prior to the date of the trip, if not, Transportation may deny the field trip request.
4. Other teachers should be notified at least two (2) weeks in advance if students are to miss their class as a result of the field trip. Students must be counted present when on a field trip and must be allowed to make up work, except as provided in section G.
5. An instructional field trip request must include an instructional plan for accommodating all students. A quality alternative instructional experience for those students choosing not to attend the field trip must be provided by the teacher supervising the trip.

**C. FINANCIAL PLANNING:**

The appropriate principal or central office administrator shall follow the procedures in the Field Trip Procedures Manual and the Local School Accounting Procedures Manual when considering the cost of the field trip and determining whether to approve or deny a trip.

**D. SUPERVISION AND CHAPERONES:**

1. Employees, parents, guardians, and/or their spouses, as well as similar adults of supervisory age, approved by the school administrator will be permitted to accompany transported groups on school buses for supervisory purposes.
2. A teacher or adult supervisor must ride on each bus.
3. In all cases, appropriate adult supervision shall be provided and approved by the school administrator. Minimum requirements for adult supervision are the following:
  - a. Elementary 1 Adult for every 15 students
  - b. Middle School 1 Adult for every 20 students
  - c. High School 1 Adult for every 25 students
4. Chaperones may not bring other children on a bus during the field trip.
5. For the duration of the field trip, employees and adult chaperones are directly accountable for their actions as if they were responsible for students on school premises. Employees and adult supervisors must refrain from personal practices, both in and out of the presence of students, which would be inconsistent with their responsibilities to supervise students.

**E. PARENTAL PERMISSION:**

1. It shall be the responsibility of the school administrator and the field trip sponsor to secure written parent/guardian permission for every student involved in a field trip through the Field Trip Management System.
2. In cases involving a series of field trips related to one particular area of study or activity, a "blanket" permission may be obtained, provided that the parents are made aware of all field trips to be included in the series. Detailed information should be given in writing to the parents at least two (2) weeks prior to each trip in the series.
3. In all situations, the permission forms supplied by the central office are to be used to gain permission from parents/guardians.
4. Students without a completed permission form may not participate in the field trip.

**F. OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS:**

1. In addition to the procedures outlined in Section B above, if the request is for an Overnight Field Trip, the appropriate central office administrator must approve the request prior to teachers discussing the trip with the students, parents, or others. Fine Arts field trips should be approved by a Supervisor of Fine Arts, athletic field trips (those activities governed by GHSA) should be approved by the District Athletic Director, and all other field trips should be approved by the appropriate Level Assistant Superintendent.
2. For field trips involving the school day or time beyond, the field trip sponsor and the school administrator shall be responsible for ensuring that the field trip sponsor provides information required in the Field Trip Procedures Manual and Field Trip Management System and that he/she can be reached by telephone during the field trip.
3. Approval for Overnight Field Trips must be requested 3 months prior to the departure date. Exceptions will be made when meeting this deadline is made impossible by third party scheduling such as state playoffs, etc.

**G. FIELD TRIPS THAT OCCUR FOR MORE THAN TWO (2) SCHOOL DAYS:**

1. Students who are on field trips which extend beyond two (2) days may not be counted present on school attendance records for more than two (2) days of the trip unless the location of the field trip is declared to be an alternate educational site by the appropriate central office administrator (see Section F.1. above) in accordance with the policies and regulations of the State Board of Education.
2. For such field trips to occur, an instructional plan shall be submitted by the school administrator to the appropriate central office administrator (see Section F.1. above) outlining the means by which the full instructional program will be implemented during the trip.

**H. OUT OF STATE FIELD TRIPS:**

In addition to all other sections of this Rule, District buses may only be used to travel to the following states not to exceed 300 miles one way:

1. Alabama;
2. Florida;
3. North Carolina;
4. South Carolina; and
5. Tennessee

Any exceptions to this section must be approved in advance by the **Senior** Executive Director of Transportation.

**I. OUT OF COUNTRY FIELD TRIPS:**

1. In addition to all other sections of this Rule, the following requirements concerning insurance apply:
  - a. A sponsoring school must have proof that all participants are covered by health and accident insurance.
  - b. Insurance must cover medical care abroad. Some travel agencies may provide coverage, or they may require proof that the participants have insurance.
  - c. Students will provide a photocopy of their insurance card should the information contained therein be required for an emergency or arrange for health and accident insurance through the travel organization or agency.
  - d. Provisions for travel cancellation should be made available to parents.
2. Travel arranged through an organization or agency must address their policy on refunding fees for cancellation by that organization or agency.
3. All those traveling on an Out of Country Field Trip must also have proper travel documents as required by federal law.
4. All students who participate in field trips out of the country must travel to and from all destinations with the field trip sponsors or chaperones.
5. All Out of Country Field Trips must be requested a year before the departure date.
6. Level Assistant Superintendents must approve all Out of Country Field Trips.
7. All Out of Country Field Trips sponsored by District staff and limited to District students are considered school-sponsored. No trips may be facilitated through private companies for District students by District employees outside of these parameters.

**J. TRANSPORTATION:**

1. Instructional field trips involving county buses should not be scheduled during regular school busing hours:
  - a. 7:00 am - 9:15 am; and
  - b. 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm
2. The use of county buses for field trips will be contingent upon the availability of vehicles and the scheduling of regular school transportation.
3. School administrators shall approve only those field trips which allow the bus to return to school by 2:00 pm or a private carrier must be used. (see Paragraph L below for more information regarding private carriers)
4. No field trips will be scheduled when school is closed because of inclement weather. Weekend trips cancellations due to inclement weather will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the designated central office administrator.

5. Transportation arrangements must be provided to accommodate any students with special needs.

**K. USE OF PRIVATE CARRIERS FOR FIELD TRIPS:**

1. Private carriers may be used for field trips provided they have been approved by the Cobb County School District. (see the Field Trip Procedures Manual for the Approved Private Carrier list)
2. Private carriers must return (15) minutes prior to school dismissal time unless other arrangements for students to be returned home from school have been made by the field trip sponsor.
3. Transportation arrangements must be provided to accommodate any students with special needs.

**L. COST OF COUNTY BUS TRANSPORTATION:**

Costs, including mileage, driver pay, and cancellation fees shall be determined by the Senior Executive Director of Transportation on an annual basis. (see the Field Trip Procedures Manual)

**M. TRANSPORTATION OTHER THAN SCHOOL BUSES OR PRIVATE CARRIERS:**

1. When parents and students volunteer to drive their own vehicles on school system business such as sporting events or other school activities, the Cobb County School District does not provide liability insurance nor medical insurance coverage for the volunteer or any passengers. Should the volunteer be involved in an accident, the volunteer is the liable party.
2. If an employee uses his/her own vehicle for school system business, the Cobb County School District policy provides coverage for the employee only. The employee's own automobile insurance policy provides primary insurance coverage and the school system's policy provides secondary coverage should the employee's policy limits be exhausted and if the school district is liable. The employee's own policy is expected to cover other passengers.
3. The use of 10-15 passenger non-conforming vans is strictly prohibited for transporting students to school related activities.

**N.** Only yellow school buses meeting federal and state specifications shall be used to transport students for all bus routes. This includes but not limited to summer school, after school, and enrichment programs where students are picked up and dropped from their residence and designated school.

**O. SPECIAL USE OF SCHOOL BUSES:**

The Board shall not authorize the use of system-owned buses for the purpose of transporting persons not connected with the system for a non-school function, except that school buses may be used to provide transportation for the elderly, persons with disabilities and 4-H activities, and for students and others to attend summer camps and participate in other recreational or educational activities if the cost of such transportation is reimbursed in full from federal, state, local or other funds other than school funds. Requests will be submitted to the Transportation Department with final approval by the Superintendent and/or designees.

Reclassified an Administrative Rule: 9/1/04  
Revised: 10/28/04; 4/11/12; 7/1/15; 10/4/19; 7/20/23

Legal Reference:

O.C.G.A. 20-2-1074	Transportation for elderly, disabled persons and 4H activities
O.C.G.A. 20-2-1075	Use of school buses for recreational or educational activities
O.C.G.A. 20-2-188	Student transportation
O.C.G.A. 20-2-411	School fund kept separate; use of funds; separation of school taxes; investments
Rule 160-5-1-.02	School Day and School Year for Students and Employees
Rule 160-5-3-.04	School Bus Insurance