

# Fieldwork and Overnight Policy

In order to maintain the safety, welfare, and educational interests of students, teachers, and volunteers, the following policy shall apply.

## Transportation

When large or small groups are leaving campus for any school-sponsored activity a school bus can be used or volunteers can transport students in their own vehicles. All volunteer drivers are subject to the requirements of the volunteer policy including criminal records background checks. Volunteer drivers shall submit their current driver's license and proof of insurance to be photocopied and kept on file in a secure location at the school.

## Parental Consent and Release of Liability

1. For each fieldwork excursion, a note must be sent home to parents/guardians describing the date, time, location, and purpose of the trip.
2. A consent and release of liability form must accompany this note and be returned to the school with the parent's signature.

## Safety Protocols and Supervision

1. All proposed fieldwork must be approved by the School Director in advance of any trips. Reasonable guidelines shall be established that provide adequate advance notice to parents and students and sufficient time for review and preparation by Director and office staff.
2. The School Director shall develop safety protocols for fieldwork that include, but are not limited to,
  - criminal records background checks for volunteers;
  - frequent "role calls" and other means of assuring attendance;
  - clear supervision responsibilities for volunteers and staff;
  - special medical consideration for designated students;
  - communication methods and procedures both within the excursion group and from the group to the school, including procedures and guidelines to be followed in the event of an emergency.
  - An adult to student ratio of 8:1 and the principle of two deep adult leadership will be maintained on all day trips.

## Camping and other Overnight Fieldwork Excursions

Overnight trips must fall within the following guidelines. Fieldwork and extended day must be approved by the director of the school. All overnight excursions must be approved by the director and the board.

### Middle School and Upper Elementary (5th-8th) Students:

For clear and compelling educational opportunities overnight trips may be proposed by the teachers.

### Lower Elementary (K-4th) Students:

- Will typically have day trips only. If there is a rare, clear, and compelling educational opportunity which cannot be had by other means, a trip may be proposed by the teachers.

## Basic Safety

1. Generally accepted safety policies and procedures shall be rigorously adhered to on all camping trips. Such practices include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Minimum two-deep adult leadership in all circumstances (hikes, outings, activities, etc.).
  - b. No one-on-one grouping of adult with student. If, for instance, a private conference is needed, this must be done in view of other adults and students.
  - c. Training in, and packing of, proper clothing and gear.
  - d. A 6:1 student to adult ratio on all overnight trips.
2. Training shall be held for those going on camping trips, and there shall be strict enforcement of the rules.
3. In camping situations that involve tent lodging:
  - two or more adult chaperone's and a teacher(s) may share a large tent with students, provided that the sleeping arrangements for the adults are on one side of the tent, and students' accommodations are on the opposite side (with an unobstructed separation of at least 3 feet between adults and students).
  - b. In all other situations, teachers must sleep alone in their own tents, and adult chaperones sleep in their own tents. Chaperones may sleep in the same tent with their own child(ren) and no others.
4. In hotel/motel lodging situations:
  - a. Teachers shall not sleep in the same room as students (except as provided in 4. c. below).
  - b. Adult chaperones sleep in their own rooms. In some cases, chaperones may sleep in the same room with students where there are two or more chaperones present. Adults may not sleep in the same bed as a student unless the student is their own child.
  - c. In large, open-room lodging situations:
    - i. Students and chaperones will be divided by gender and assigned to separate rooms.
    - ii. The room will be clearly divided into a student sleeping area and an adult sleeping area.
    - iii. Appropriate measures will be taken to maintain individual privacy.
    - iv. For the safety of all involved, teachers are strongly encouraged to find and use large, open-room lodging accommodations where possible (don't forget your earplugs).
5. Opposite gender camps shall be clearly separated from one another.
6. Parents and students shall receive and provide signed consent to abide by the safety rules and submit to the consequences of breaking rules.
  - a. Fieldwork is an extension of the school boundaries. Consequently, all rules related to the prohibition of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and weapons with regard to both adults and students apply in all aspects of the trip including night-time, while in transport, and at all fieldwork locations.
  - b. As part of this agreement parents accept the responsibility, as a consequence of their child breaking the rules, to pick up and transport their child home from a trip *at any time during the trip* should the need arise.

### **Campout costs**

1. The School must stay within the budget raised and allocated for the experience.
2. Students will be given enough time to know costs, and will be required to make a reasonable effort to provide for needs through fund-raising, borrowing of equipment, etc.
3. The School will provide necessary funds and equipment if a student (and family) is not financially able to cover the costs.

### **Participation Requirements**

Overnight trips are intended to provide direct, rare, and compelling educational experiences. Consequently, the School hopes to have all students participate. However, in situations where parents prefer not to have their child participate in overnight trips, such participation is not required and students will not be penalized for failure to attend. Under circumstances of non-participation, the school is not responsible for any missed experiences that the students forgo for having elected not to attend.