

AMEND BOARD REPORT 01-0926-PO1
AMEND BOARD REPORT 97-1217-PO1
POLICY ON STUDENT TRAVEL

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTION:

Amend Board Report ~~97-1217-PO1~~ 01-0926-PO1 and adopt the following Chicago Public Schools' Amended Policy on Student Travel.

PURPOSE:

To provide updated information on requirements for students traveling outside the borders of the United States.

PRESENT POLICY:

"Amended Policy on Student Travel" 01-0926-PO1, "Amended Policy on Student Travel" (97-1217-PO1)

HISTORY OF BOARD ACTION:

"Policy on Student Travel" (96-0925-PO2); "Non-Approved Field Trips" (Policy 79-72-2, Adopted April 18, 1979); "Policy on Student Travel" (96-0925-PO2), Adopted September 25, 1996); "Amended Policy on Student Travel" (97-0226-PO1, Adopted February 26, 1997); and "Amended Policy on Student Travel (97-1217-PO1, Adopted December 17, 1997), and Amended Policy on Student Travel 01-0926-PO1, Adopted September 26, 2001.

POLICY TEXT:

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS' AMENDED POLICY ON STUDENT TRAVEL

Field trips and student travel are one means of enriching the education of Chicago Public Schools' students. These guidelines have been developed in order to ensure the safety of students and their adult chaperones during student trips. For the purposes of this document, student travel is divided into two subgroups: educational and non-educational, with the Chief Education Officer acting as final arbiter of whether a trip is educational or non-educational.

Schools are not to schedule Category 1, 2, or 3 trips during the first three weeks or the last two weeks of the school year. Further, no student is permitted to participate in a trip when that student is scheduled to take a standardized test.

I. EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL

Educational travel consists of school-sponsored trips of an educational nature that are designed to provide students with knowledge and experiences to supplement their curriculum. Educational trips include but are not limited to visiting museums and zoos and going to theater productions, business / industry tours, cultural exhibits, and nature centers. Educational trips fall into one of the following four categories:

Category 1.

(A) Trips outside the borders of the U.S., and (B), trips using Discretionary Funds in the amount of \$10,000 and over. One-day stopovers outside of the United States, e.g., African American Heritage Tour stopovers in Canada, shall be excluded from Category 1 (A) travel outside of the United States.

Requirements for Student Travel Outside the United States, Category 1 (A):

The principal must submit the "Application for Student Travel" and a Board Report to the Office of Language and Cultural Education 60 calendar days before the monthly meeting of the Board of Education proceeding the trip, or 60 calendar days before the disbursement of any funds, whichever is earlier. The Office of Language and Cultural Education will forward the Board Report to the Chief Education Officer for approval and transmittal to the Office of Schools and Regions for routing, signatures, and placement on the agenda of the Board meeting.

Educational travel outside of the United States must comply with the following:

- no travel should be scheduled during the first three weeks or the last two weeks of the school year
- no student is permitted to participate in a trip three weeks leading up to and including system-wide testing
- travel for elementary school students should be limited to no more than seven school days
- travel for high school students should be limited to no more than ten school days

Supervision:

- Chaperones must accompany students to and from the travel destination as well as during the entire tour.
- One chaperone is required for every six students. A minimum of two chaperones is required regardless of the number of students traveling.
- Certified teachers, teacher assistants, educational support personnel, Board-approved volunteers and/or parents may accompany students, with a minimum of two CPS teacher-certificated employees assigned as chaperones.

Responsibilities:

School Principal

- Review the "Application for Student Travel" to assure that all requirements are met.
- Ensure that the tour has educational value related to participants' classroom instruction/curriculum
- Review educational trip dates to make certain that they comply with the calendar limits of student travel
- Notify Local School Council of the educational significance of trip
- Contact the appropriate consulate/embassy in the country for travel emergency information
- Prepare Board Report and submit it to the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer within the required timeline
- For participating language teacher(s), assign a substitute(s) of the same language background
- Maintain contact as needed by international pager (to be obtained through the Office of Language and Cultural Education)
- Have readily available all emergency information for all trip participants (copies of passports, copies of visas, medical information including allergies and medications and contact person in case of an emergency)
- In case of an emergency, contact one of the following as soon as possible in the order given and subject to availability. ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer, Office of Language and Cultural Education and Chief Education Officer
- Have available the name and telephone number of the tour operator or travel agency
- Identify and specify emergency procedures for School Tour Supervisor
- Have available the address and telephone number of the nearest American consulate and/or embassy

- Review school tour supervisor's plan for completion of student-participants' classroom assignments

School Tour Supervisor

- Secure international pager through the Office of Language and Cultural Education
- Develop and implement a plan to ensure that student-participants' classroom assignments are met
- Hold all emergency information for all trip participants (passports, visas, medical information including allergies and medications and contact person in case of an emergency)
- In case of an emergency, contact one of the following as soon as possible in the order given and subject to availability: school principal, ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer, Office of Language and Cultural Education, and Chief Education Officer
- Have available the address and telephone number of the nearest American consulate and/or embassy
- Have available the name and telephone number of the tour operator or travel agency

Chaperones

- Assist school tour supervisor with students to, from and during the trip tours
- Travel with students to and from all tour destinations
- Hold all emergency information for all trip participants (passports, visas, medical information including allergies and medications and contact person in case of an emergency)
- In case of an emergency, contact one of the following as soon as possible in the order given and subject to availability: school principal, ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer, Office of Language and Cultural Education, and Chief Education Officer
- Have available the address and telephone of the nearest American consulate and/or embassy
- Have available the name and telephone number of the tour operator or travel agency

For trips in Category 1 (B), the principal must submit the "Application for Student Travel" to the Chief Education Officer and a Board Report to the Region Education Officer 45 calendar days before the monthly meeting of the Board of Education preceding the trip, or 45 calendar days before the disbursement of any funds, whichever is earlier. If the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer approves the proposed trip, he or she will forward the Board Report to the Office of the Chief Education Officer, for approval and transmittal to the Office of Schools and Regions for routing, signatures, and placement on the agenda of the Board meeting.

If the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer does not approve the trip, the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer must cite the reasons in writing, and the principal may appeal the decision to the Chief Education Officer. No funds shall be disbursed before approval of the Board Report.

The Board and/or the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer reserve the right to rescind approval of trips when, in the judgment of the Board and/or the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer, circumstances may jeopardize the safety of students and chaperones.

Category 2.

- (A) Overnight or out-of-state trips which are paid from student fees and/or local fund-raising efforts, and
(B), trips using Discretionary Funds under \$10,000.

Trips in this category do not require Board Reports. The principal must submit the "Application for Student Travel" to the Region Education Officer for review and approval five workdays prior to travel or the disbursement of any funds, whichever is earlier. No funds, including deposits, shall be disbursed before approval of the application by the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer. The ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer shall forward a copy of the application to Risk Management no less than 48 hours before the start of the trip.

The ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer reserves the right to rescind his or her approval of trips when, in his or her judgment, circumstances may jeopardize the safety of students and chaperones.

Category 3.

One-day field trips. For trips in Category 3, the principal must submit the "Application for Student Travel" to the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer for review at least five workdays prior to the trip. The ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer shall forward a copy of the application by confirmed fax to Risk Management no less than 48 hours before the start of the trip.

The ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer reserves the right to disapprove trips when, in the judgment of the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer, circumstances may jeopardize the safety of students and chaperones.

Category 4.

Non-scheduled interscholastic competitions, and other similar events, and interscholastic athletic or ROTC events other than centrally-determined league schedule trips require the principal to file the "Application for Student Travel" with the ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer for review prior to the date of the trip. The ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer shall forward a copy of the application by confirmed fax to Risk Management prior to the date of the trip.

Academic, ROTC, and athletic activities which are scheduled through centrally-determined league schedules are considered to be part of the student's schedule, and are not considered as student "trips" for purposes of this policy. Therefore, these activities do not require the "Application for Student Travel."

Trips for students with disabilities for whom travel is an integral component of their education, as documented in the Student's Individual Education Plan (i.e., for mobility training, community based instruction, and/or for employment) are not considered as student "trips" for purposes of this policy. Therefore, these activities do not require the "Application for Student Travel."

The ~~Region Education Officer~~ Area Instruction Officer reserves the right to disapprove trips when, in the judgment of the Region Education Officer, circumstances may jeopardize the safety of students and chaperones.

II. NON-EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL

Non-educational trips include but are not limited to trips to amusement parks and/or recreational facilities. Non-educational trips will not be approved when travel is scheduled during school days while school is in session. Non-educational trips may be approved for after-school hours. Non-educational overnight trips will not be approved under any circumstances. No Discretionary Funds are to be used for non-educational trips, and these trips must conform to appropriate guidelines in Section I.

III. REQUIRED FORMS

The school must file the "Application for Student Travel" and a signed "Release Form" from each participating student and from each participating adult chaperone. The school must retain originals of each of the release forms and a copy of the Board Report and/or the "Application," on file. Signatures on these documents shall be actual signatures, i.e., no stamps and no initials.

For trips that require the signing of contracts or legal documents which contain "hold harmless" clauses, principals are advised that all such contracts require prior review and approval by the Board Attorney. Required forms must be submitted thirty days in advance of these trips, to allow time for contract review by the Law Department.

IV. COSTS AND FEES

A written description of all costs of the trip must be provided in advance to students and parents.

Illinois School Code Section 5/10-20.13 requires the waiver of all fees assessed by the Board upon children whose parents are unable to afford those fees. Schools must make provision for waiver of trip fees for students in this category through fund-raising efforts, school-based scholarships, and other means. For further information, refer to the "Waiver of School Fees," (Policy 94-1026-PO2).

The collecting, maintaining, and disbursing of funds collected for student trips are subject to the provisions within the guidelines of the "School Internal Accounts Manual."

V. SUPERVISION: PRE-KINDERGARTEN -GRADE 12

Certificated teachers, teacher assistants, educational support personnel, Board-approved volunteers and/or parents (hereafter, "supervisors") must accompany students in a ratio of 10 students to 1 adult to provide for student safety, with a minimum of two adult supervisors on every trip, and with one of the supervisors to be a certificated, school-assigned teacher. For students with disabilities on approved Category 4 trips, a student-to-supervisor ratio of 5-to-1 may be approved at the discretion of the principal.

For further information, refer to the "Chicago Public Schools Volunteer Program" (Policy ~~01-0822-PO4 96-0327-PO6~~). The names of all supervisors must be included in the Board Report and / or on the approval form.

VI. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities may require additional staff and/or accommodations. These must be provided in accordance with the student's Individual Educational Plan or Section 504 Service Plan at no additional cost to the student or parent / guardian. The principal should make special note of additional supervisors provided for students with disabilities on the "Application for Student Travel."

VII. TRANSPORTATION

Use of private vehicles for student trips is strongly discouraged. However, when use of a private vehicle is the only feasible method of travel, such vehicles may be used only if the total number of passengers per vehicle (including the driver) is 10 or less and the following stipulations are met: (1) the private vehicle must be a motor vehicle designed to carry no more than 10 passengers (including the driver), with functioning seatbelts for each person; (2) no more passengers (including the driver) may be transported in the private vehicle than the vehicle was designed to carry; and (3) any person requesting to transport students in a private vehicle must receive prior written approval from the school principal.

When a private vehicle is used for transportation, the principal shall ensure that the driver holds a valid driver's license and liability insurance of \$300,000 for a vehicle manufactured to transport up to six passengers or \$500,000 for a vehicle manufactured to transport more than six passengers. The principal must retain a photocopy of the driver's license and insurance documentation.

When the total number of passengers per vehicle (including the driver) is more than ten, no private vehicle may be used. In these instances, transportation requires the use of a standard yellow school bus operated by a vendor approved by the Board, or CTA or RTA vehicles, or Interstate Commerce Commission-licensed carriers.

VIII. INSURANCE

Principals must arrange for medical insurance coverage for all students on all overnight or out-of state trips prior to the commencement of the trip by completing the "Application for Student Travel." Information on insurance can be found on the "Application for Student Travel" form. For further information, contact the Department of Risk Management at 553-3310.

IX. USE OF DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

Discretionary funds such as State Chapter 1 may be used only under certain circumstances within the parameters established by the "Revised State Chapter 1 Guidelines" (Policy 96-0124-PO3).

Under the guidelines for State Chapter I spending, buses for field trips may be used for trips within Chicago city limits only. Object 5500 -- Student Travel Expense -- may be used for trips beyond the Chicago city limits only with educational justification and only for reasonable expenses. The State Chapter I "Travel procedures" form must be submitted and approved prior to the trip.

These guidelines are available for review at each school, the region Area Instruction eOffices, the Office of Schools and Regions, ~~the Office of Policy, the Office of School Leadership Development,~~ and the Office of the Board.

X. WATER ACTIVITIES

No student is permitted to enter a swimming pool, hot tub, lake, or other body of water, while on a school-sponsored trip unless a currently-certified lifeguard or water safety instructor, whose only duty shall be to lifeguard the swimmers, and an adult supervisor are present. As part of the approval process for water activities on out-of-town trips, the water safety instructor and life guard certification documentation must be provided for the individual who is the designated lifeguard for the CPS student group as part of the "Application for Student Travel." If the owner of a swimming pool, hot tub, lake, or other body of water agrees to provide lifeguards, then that owner or a representative shall provide a letter indicating that certified life guards will be on duty at all times when CPS students would be engaging in water activities. The required documentation must be submitted as part of the "Application for Student Travel."

This restriction does not apply to interscholastic swimming and diving competitions, nor to trips specifically arranged for swimming instruction taught by Red Cross-certified or comparably-certified personnel as part of the physical education curriculum.

Under no circumstances are students allowed to use sailboats, rowboats, canoes or other recreational boats; this prohibition does not apply to student transport on U.S. Coast Guard approved commercial boat charters.

Students with disabilities may participate in approved water activities as per their I.E.P., with approval of the principal.

XI. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Any trip not approved, not covered by this policy, or not adhering to these guidelines is prohibited. Any trip for which prior approval was not obtained will not be approved following the date(s) of the trip, and, further, retroactive payments of expenses for the trip will not be approved.

Violations of this policy may lead to action under Policy 95-1025-PO1 ("Personnel Policy, Teachers and Administrators, Discipline") or Policy 95-1025-PO2 ("Personnel Policy, Educational Support Personnel, Discipline and Discharge").

RATIONALE:

This policy is necessary to establish a uniform set of procedures that govern the application process, and a uniform set of guidelines that govern the circumstances under which students may travel for educational and non-educational purposes.

FINANCIAL:

The Department of Risk Management estimates that the elimination of accident and sickness insurance for one-day trips will save over \$100,000 in premiums in each fiscal year.

LEGAL REFERENCES:

105 ILCS 5/29-3.1; 105 ILCS 5/34-18

Approved for Consideration:

Barbara Eason Watkins (a.k.)

BARBARA EASON-WATKINS
Chief Education Officer

Respectfully submitted,

Arne Duncan
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Chief Executive Officer

Approved as to Legal Form:

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