

<b>Descriptor Term:</b> FIELD TRIPS		<b>Descriptor Code:</b> 3320* (formerly IFCB)
<b>Presented to the Board:</b> April 19, 1993 August 11, 2015	<b>Adopted by the Board:</b> June 7, 1993	<b>Revised by the Board:</b> October 28, 2004 September 24, 2015 February 9, 2016 <b>Recodified as policy 3320:</b> May 10, 2022

The Guilford County Board of Education recognizes the field trip as a valuable learning experience provided it is properly planned and carefully executed. Planning would include advanced preparation, opportunities for students to assimilate the experience before and during the field trip, and integration of the experience into the regular classroom program at the conclusion of the trip. Planning would also direct attention to safety, transportation, school lunches, liability, supervision, time away from school, inclusion, and learning experiences. ~~The principal shall approve field trips only when he/she is assured that these requirements have been fulfilled and that the field trip is an extension of the classroom instructional program.~~

**A. AUTHORIZATION FOR SCHOOL TRIPS**

A school trip occurs when a student or group of students leaves a school campus under the sponsorship of the school and under the supervision of school employees to extend the educational experiences of that student or group. This includes trips taken by extracurricular groups sponsored by the school but does not include usual and customary trips by athletic teams, music groups, or other competitive organizations to participate in events or competitions. Optional competitions and travel by extracurricular groups must be approved according to this policy.

A field trip should:

- relate to a particular aspect of the ongoing classroom instruction and the standard curriculum of the school system.
- afford a meaningful learning experience which cannot be provided in the school setting.
- provide activities suitable to the age level of the students.
- be reasonable in terms of length of trip, duration, distance traveled, and cost.
- provide for students' medical and disability accommodation needs.

The principal must approve all school field trips in advance. School field trips that involve travel out of state and/or an overnight stay must also receive prior approval from the superintendent or designee. School trips that require travel outside of the continental

United States must be approved by the superintendent at least 90 calendar days prior to the planned departure.

#### **B. PARENTAL NOTICE AND CONSENT**

All students who participate in a school trip must provide signed parental consent forms to participate, unless a student is officially emancipated, in which case the student can consent on their own behalf. Written consent may be provided on paper or via electronic signature; however, verbal consent is not sufficient. A student who fails to provide a signed consent form will be denied participation in the trip. No student's grade may be lowered or raised based on parental consent to participate in the school trip. The superintendent shall develop procedures to ensure parents are given proper notice of trip details and that parents provide signed authorization and consent regarding their child's participation and care during the trip.

Students are not permitted to share sleeping quarters with anyone of the other biological sex as defined in G.S. 12-3.3 during a school trip unless (1) the member of the other biological sex is the student's immediate family member (i.e., a parent, sibling, or grandparent, including step or half relationships) or (2) the parents of all students sharing the sleeping quarters have provided written permission to the school.

#### **C. COSTS**

Students must not be charged a fee for any trip that is a required extension of the curriculum, though fees may be requested for optional school trips. The superintendent or designee should develop procedures to waive or reduce fees for students who demonstrate economic hardship.

#### **D. STUDENT SAFETY AND DISCIPLINE**

The policies, rules and regulations which the Guilford County Schools or any of its individual schools have adopted concerning student conduct are applicable while students are participating in field trips. Students participating in approved school trips are considered in attendance. (See policy 4400 Student Attendance.) Prior to any field trip, arrangements shall be made by the principal and the staff for students to make up any work missed in other classes.

The principal must make certain that adequate supervision is provided for all school trips. The supervision plan for all GCS school trips must include supervision for each class including at least two adults, one of whom must be a GCS employee.

All school trips are subject to cancellation or postponement by the Superintendent, or designee when emergency or hazardous conditions exist. Such conditions include severe weather warnings and national security alerts that affect the travel area.

#### **E. EMPLOYEE AND VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS**

School employees and volunteers are subject to all policies, rules, and expectations of the Guilford County Schools while participating in a school trip. School employees and volunteers are expected to prioritize the safety of students during the school trip. All volunteers must be approved by the Guilford County Schools before being permitted to volunteer on a school trip, which includes undergoing a criminal records check. (See policy 5015 School Volunteers.)

#### F. NON-SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS

A non-school sponsored trip is a trip or tour organized and sponsored by:

- (1) an individual teacher or group of teachers acting as private citizens and not as school employees,
- (2) a travel agency, or
- (3) any other individual or association not employed by, sponsored by, or under contract with the board.

The board and the school system assume no responsibility, liability or financial obligation for non-school sponsored trips. All promotional materials for non-school sponsored trips must prominently state that the trip is not sponsored or endorsed by the school or school system. Any employee who sponsors or recruits students for a non-school sponsored trip shall notify the students and their parents or caregivers that the trip is not sponsored or endorsed by the school or school system and shall obtain a signed acknowledgement from each parent that the trip is not school-sponsored.

School employees shall not engage in any planning or administrative tasks associated with a non-school sponsored trip during the employee workday. School employees are prohibited from participating in non-school sponsored trips that conflict with instructional school days or are scheduled fewer than 10 school days prior to final exams or other state-mandated assessments.

Students will not be required to participate in any non-school sponsored trip. Absences for non-school sponsored trips will be designated as excused or unexcused in accordance with policy 4400, Student Attendance.

Approval and planning processes for school trips shall be described in administrative regulations issued by the superintendent.

~~Usual and customary activities associated with athletics, competitive forensics, music, and other similar experiences are not field trips within the meaning of this policy. Field trips by school clubs, however, must meet the same criteria and be approved in the same manner as all other school approved field trips. All school sponsored trips including co-curricular and extra-curricular trips (such as athletics, etc.) are subject to cancellation or postponement as outlined below under "Approval."~~

#### **Criteria for Field Trips**

Teachers, principals, and administrators shall consider the following criteria in planning and approving field trips. The field trip should:

- relate to a particular aspect of the on-going classroom instruction and the standard curriculum of the school system.
- afford a meaningful learning experience which cannot be provided in the school setting.
- provide activities suitable to the age level of the students.
- be reasonable in terms of length of trip, duration, distance traveled, and cost.
- accommodate students' medical needs.
- provide assurances that no student is denied the opportunity to participate because of an inability to pay expenses associated with the cost of the field trip.

#### **Written Permission**

Because the safety of the students is a primary consideration in the approval of and carrying out of field trips, students must have the written permission of their parents for their participation in each specific field trip.

#### **Student Conduct**

The policies, rules, and regulations which the Guilford County Schools or any of its individual schools have adopted concerning student conduct are applicable while students are participating in field trips.

#### **Approval**

The sponsoring teacher must hold a preliminary conference with the building principal(s) and secure the principal(s)' tentative approval before conducting any discussions with students/parents regarding the proposed field trip.

- All field trips within the state must be approved by the school principal.
- Additionally, prior to any notice to students, parents, or the community, overnight and/or out-of-state field trips must have the initial approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Final approval must be obtained from the Superintendent or his/her designee at least one month in advance of the date of the trip.

- All school trips are subject to cancellation or postponement by the Superintendent, when emergency or hazardous conditions exist. Such conditions include severe weather warnings and national security alerts that affect the travel area. Staff, parents, and students should be aware of this possibility as any trip is planned.

#### **Absences and Make-Up Work**

Participation in an approved field trip shall be considered an excused absence and the student shall be entitled to make up his/her work. Prior to any field trip, arrangements shall be made by the principal and the staff for students to make up any work missed in other classes.

Additionally, no student's grade shall be lowered if the parents do not consent for the student to go on the field trip.

#### **Supervision**

The principal must make certain that adequate supervision is provided for all field trips. At least two adults are required per class for a trip. In addition to teachers, parents can fulfill this minimum supervision requirement.

The Superintendent shall develop procedures for the implementation of this policy.

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Legal References: [G.S. 12-3.3](#); [115C-47](#), [-76.110](#), [-288](#), [-307](#), State Board of Education Policy [TRAN-009](#)

Cross References: School Safety (policy 1510/4200/7270), Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Attendance (policy 4400), School Volunteers (policy 5015), Student Transportation Services (policy 6300), Contracts with the Board (policy 6420/8460)

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