



November 18, 2014

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Revision to Field Trip Policy

Recommendation: That the School Committee approve the revision to the Field Trip policy as detailed in the attached document.

This is a first reading of the proposed revision to the policy.

Description: This recommendation to revise the field trip policy to address the use of personal vehicles for the transportation of students participating in athletic events, academic team events, co-curricular and extracurricular activities is being presented in response to School Committee Order C14-281 from the October 21, 2014 meeting.

Supporting Data: Attached redline of Field Trip Policy

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey M. Young".

Jeffrey M. Young, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



File: IJOA

FIELD TRIP POLICY

The Cambridge School Committee recognizes that first-hand experiences provided by field trips and school-sponsored trips are a most effective and worthwhile means of learning; therefore, the Cambridge School Committee encourages that field trips and school-sponsored trips of significant educational value, which are related to the total school program and curriculum. Additionally, due to the inherent educational value of field trips and school-sponsored trips, it is the School Committee's goal that all students be able to participate in and have equal access to field trips and school-sponsored trips.

Consistent with this goal, the Superintendent of Schools shall establish guidelines for field trips and school sponsored trips. These guidelines shall address the process for screening, evaluating and approving field trips and school-sponsored trips in order to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the health, safety and welfare of the participants and to ensure no substantial disruption to the educational process and the inherent educational value of the field trip and/or school-sponsored trip. Additionally, the guidelines shall provide that no student shall be denied participation in a field trip or school-sponsored trip as a consequence or form of punishment for previous behavior for which he or she already has been disciplined. A student may only be excluded from a field trip or school-sponsored trip if the date or dates of his/her suspension or expulsion from school for a violation of school-based rules or the codes of conduct set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* coincides with the scheduled date or dates of the field trip or school-sponsored trip, or if, in the judgment of the principal/head of upper school, a student's previous or current behavior poses a substantial risk to the health, safety and welfare of the student, other students and/or staff participating in the field trip and/or school-sponsored event. The guidelines also should require the prior approval of all field trips or school-sponsored trips by the principal/head of upper school, and the prior approval by the Superintendent of Schools and/or his/her designee of all overnight and out-of-state or out-of-country trips. Furthermore, the guidelines shall establish procedures to assure that: (i) all students have parental/guardian permission for trips; (ii) all trips are properly supervised, (iii) all safety precautions are observed, (iv) all student files have been reviewed to determine if any accommodations or modifications are required in order for a student to participate in and have equal access to any field trip or school-sponsored trip; (v) all trips contribute substantially to the educational program; (vi) the district is monitoring whether students are excluded from participation in and/or having equal access to field trips and/or school-sponsored trips and, if so, for what reasons; and (vii) there are procedures in place for parents/guardians to appeal a decision to exclude a student from participation and access to a field trip and/or school-sponsored trip. Field trips and school-sponsored trips shall not require approval of the Cambridge School Committee.

Approval of all field trips and school-sponsored trips shall be conditional. Approval for any field trip or school-sponsored trip may be revoked if a change in circumstances, whether man-made or

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natural, would warrant cancellation of this field trip or school sponsored trip in the interest of the safety of the students and staff of the Cambridge Public Schools.

The Cambridge Public Schools and the Cambridge School Committee will not be responsible for any financial obligations incurred as a result of the planning of the field trip or school-sponsored trip, or for any monies that are non-refundable or are otherwise lost due to the subsequent cancellation of the field trip or school-sponsored trip or due to a student's exclusion from participation and access to a field trip or school-sponsored trip as a result of the student's suspension or expulsion from school on the date or dates of the field trip or school-sponsored trip.

No student shall be denied participation in a field trip or school-sponsored trip that takes place during the school day (and is not an overnight trip) because of financial inability to pay the fee. Each club, team or group is responsible for raising all of the money necessary to fund a field trip or school-sponsored trip that is being proposed by a group of students. No fundraising or other preparations for a field trip or school-sponsored trip should occur until the field trip or school-sponsored trip has been approved. No financial support will be available from the Cambridge Public School Department or the Cambridge School Committee for any overnight, out-of-state or out-of-country travel unless an athletic team or academic team or competition has qualified for an overnight, out-of-state or out-of-country competition and in these narrow circumstances final approval of funding for such travel by an athletic team or academic team is subject to final approval by the Superintendent.

The Cambridge Public School Department and the Cambridge School Committee will not be responsible for any expenses incurred as a result of a chaperone's decision to send a student participant home earlier than the scheduled return date due to the student's unacceptable behavior. Students and their parents/guardians will be held responsible for any damage done to hotels, rental properties, real or personal property. Parents/guardians must agree to pay for any damages that may be done by their son/daughter and/or aid school officials in collecting money necessary to do so.

For all field trips requiring transportation, transportation must be provided by a common carrier that is licensed to do business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is licensed for passenger transport by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, or in an approved Cambridge Public Schools licensed vehicle or by public transportation, such as the MBTA, bus, train or other form of public transportation.

All charter services for field trips or school-sponsored trips must be provided by a common carrier that is licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to provide charter services and is licensed for passenger transport by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. All vendors that provide transportation for field trips or school-sponsored trips must provide evidence that their driver(s) are licensed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to drive the vehicles being used to provide the transportation for the field trips and/or the charter services for the field trips. All transportation vendors also must maintain liability insurance with a minimum of \$500,000

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(five hundred thousand dollars) per occurrence for bodily injury. No transportation vendor shall be used to provide transportation and/or charter services for field trips or school-sponsored trips if it has a rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory" issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Nothing in this field trip policy should be construed to prohibit field trips where students travel by means of walking or public transportation.

Use of privately owned vehicles or leased vans to transport students to and from field trips, athletic events or school sponsored trips are strictly prohibited, except in the case of a bona fide emergency or for athletic events, academic team events, co-curricular or extracurricular activities as outlined below. Determination of the existence of a bona fide emergency will be made by the Principal/Head of Upper School and/or Trip Leader if the Principal/Head of Upper School is not present. Staff and parents/guardians who use their own vehicles risk being legally liable for any injury a student sustains while in the vehicle.

School buses, public transportation or transportation by a common carrier that is licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to provide charter services and is licensed for passenger transport by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration should be used when feasible for the transportation of students participating in athletic events, academic team events, co-curricular or extracurricular activities and must be used for overnight travel and student travel that is scheduled between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. However, when such methods of transportation are not available or are not a reasonable means of transportation due to either the cost, number of students needing transport and/or other reasons, private vehicles may be permitted to transport students to and from athletic events, co-curricular or extracurricular activities that fall within the academic day or extend the school day and that do not include overnight travel or travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. provided all of the following conditions have been met:

1. The activity has been approved by the principal/head of upper school and the Superintendent of Schools or designee.
2. The owner of the vehicle being used to transport the students must have been CORI checked in accordance with the School Committee's Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) policy.
3. The owner of the vehicle submits a signed statement certifying that he/she has personal liability insurance coverage on the vehicle in the amount of \$300,000 (three hundred thousand dollars) or more which is in full force and effect and is fully paid up and has named the City of Cambridge and the Cambridge Public Schools as additional insureds on this insurance.
4. The owner of the vehicle being used to transport the students submits a signed statement certifying that his/her vehicle is in good working order, properly licensed and that he/she will be driving the vehicle that is being used to transport

the students and that he/she holds and possesses a valid drivers' license that has not been revoked or suspended.

5. The owner of the vehicle being used to transport the students submits a signed statement certifying that all students being transported in the vehicle will be required to comply with all Massachusetts child passenger safety laws, including without limitation, that all children riding in passenger motor vehicles must be in a Federally-approved child passenger restraint that is properly fastened and secured until they are 8 years old or over 57 inches tall. Additionally, the owner of the vehicle being used to transport the students submits a signed statement certifying all children under the age of 13 that are being transported in the vehicle will be required to ride in the back seat of a passenger vehicle and will be required to use all appropriate passenger restraints (seat belts (lap and shoulder)) and/or car seats as required by Massachusetts law, and that all children over the age of 13 that are being transported in the vehicle will be required to use all appropriate passenger restraints (seat belts (lap and shoulder)) as required by Massachusetts law.

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6. The owner of the vehicle being used to transport the students represents and warrants that he/she will indemnify and hold harmless the City of Cambridge, Cambridge Public Schools and the Cambridge School Committee from all liability, loss, damage costs, claims and/or causes of action arising out of or related to his/her transportation of students in his/her vehicle and the owner of the vehicle agrees to assume all liability for any injury a student sustains while in the vehicle.

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7. Parents/guardians of students will be asked if they consent and authorize the transportation of their child in a private vehicle and will sign a consent and release form for such transportation.

No school staff will be required to utilize a private vehicle to transport students to and from athletic events, academic team events, co-curricular or extracurricular activities.

No student will be excluded from participating and accessing an athletic team event, academic team event, co-curricular or extracurricular activity if his/her parent/guardian does not consent to having their child transported in the private vehicle of another parent/guardian.

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Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with safety and security in mind and, whenever possible, travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. should be avoided, trip itineraries should leave enough room for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense and take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic and unanticipated factors.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.c. 71, §37N
Massachusetts Department of Education Model Policy

Adopted:

Cambridge Public Schools