

Field Trips and Other Student Travel

The Sanford School Committee recognizes the importance of school-sponsored trips as a means of extending the curriculum and as a vehicle for encouraging and supporting student participation in academic, artistic, and athletic activities, performances and competitions. In addition, some school-sponsored trips may provide social experiences and contribute to the development of a positive school culture while providing opportunities for social-emotional growth and development.

Field Trips

Field trips are any trip organized and conducted by an employee of the Sanford School Department as an integral part of the school curriculum.

Teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in selection of field trips:

- A. Relationship of the field trip activity to the adopted curriculum;
- B. Value of the specific learning activities to be experienced during the trip;
- C. Suitability of the field trip activity and distance traveled in terms of the age level;
- D. Mode and availability of transportation, with school bus transportation arranged not to disrupt the school bus schedules;
- E. Arrangements for meals (if applicable);
- F. Availability of appropriate funding for all necessary expenses.

Whenever possible, all students at a particular grade level will be given the opportunity to benefit from the same or similar field trip or excursion.

No student will be denied the opportunity to take part in a field trip due to lack of adequate funds. Student safety is at the forefront of any decision made related to student participation. Any student who poses a risk to themselves or others may be excluded from participating in a field trip. Any exclusion requires the approval of the building administrator and superintendent or superintendent designee. Parents will be notified in advance of a decision. Students unable to participate in a field trip for whatever reason shall be assured of an opportunity for a quality educational experience at school during the time of the trip.

Students with disabilities may not be discriminated against in consideration of field trip participation to the degree that a student with a disability participates in the curricular objectives directly connected to the field trip. Students with disabilities will have equal access to field trips to the same extent as nondisabled peers, including specialized transportation.

The building administrator must approve all field trips.

Any field trip that will require students to travel over 100 miles one way and/or remain away from home overnight must be submitted to the Superintendent for approval prior to arrangements being made by the staff member involved.

In addition, the School Committee requires that:

- A. Parents/guardians give written permission for field trip participation.

- B. In-district travel between schools on district transportation during the school day does not require a signed permission slip. However, parents must be notified of the trip in advance.
- C. Adequate supervision be provided to maintain discipline and safety and to respond to emergencies; and
- D. Students participating in field trips conduct themselves in a manner consistent with School Committee policies and school rules.

Competition Trips

“Competition trip” means any trip related to an academic, artistic, athletic, or other student competition or performance that involves individual students or teams. The Superintendent must approve any competition trip that is outside of those scheduled for the year in advance. Approval may be contingent upon availability of funding through the school budget or other sources.

Other School-Sponsored Trips

Other school-sponsored trips are those that are organized and conducted by one or more employees of the Sanford School Department as a supplement to the curriculum, as a class social activity, or as an activity planned by a student club or organization. Such trips may include overnight, long-distance in-state or out-of-state travel, or foreign travel. To be school-sponsored, the trip must relate directly to the curriculum or to activities for which the student club is organized.

Participation in such trips is entirely voluntary. There shall be no extra credit awarded for participation and no loss of credit for not taking a trip.

Participation may be limited to students taking courses related to the purpose of the trip or to students who are affiliated with the student club or organization planning the trip.

The Superintendent must approve, in advance, any trips involving out-of state travel and/or over 100 miles and all overnight and foreign trips. Approval may be contingent upon availability of funding from the school budget and other sources, including student fundraising.

Staff or administrators seeking approval for school-sponsored trips must furnish the following information

- A. Objectives of the trip and anticipated outcomes;
- B. Specific experiences to be provided;
- C. Number and grade(s) of students;
- D. Criteria for student participation;
- E. Maximum number of students who may participate;
- F. Cost per student, including funds requested from Sanford and from individual students;

- G. Fundraising plans (if applicable);
- H. Transportation arrangements;
- I. Itinerary;
- J. Arrangements for meals and lodging;
- K. Arrangements for adult supervision/chaperons, with a minimum ratio of one adult chaperone to 7 students K-12 with exceptions considered by the superintendent;
- L. Plans for safety and emergencies;
- M. Plans for communicating information to parents and obtaining parental permission;
and
- N. Accountability for student conduct.

Adequate supervision must be provided to maintain discipline and safety and to respond to emergencies.

Students participating in field trips and other school-sponsored trips must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Board policies and school rules. Students who violate Board policy or school rules will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Non-School-Sponsored Travel

Travel organized by Sanford School Department employees, parents or others that is not an extension of the instructional program or school-sponsored activities and has not been approved as a school-sponsored trip in compliance with this policy will be considered a non-school-sponsored trip.

All responsibility for non-school-sponsored trips lies with the individual(s) or group(s) organizing them. The Board accepts no responsibility for non-school-sponsored trips, and organizers should be aware that such trips or are not covered by the school unit's liability insurance.

To minimize the impact of these trips on the instructional program and operation of the schools, the Board strongly encourages organizers/sponsors to schedule non-school-sponsored trips during weekends and/or vacation periods. Staff members planning or participating in non-school-sponsored travel must notify the building principal of such plans. Student absences due to participation in non-school sponsored travel will be considered unexcused absences.

Instructional time may not be used to promote the trip or distribute materials. Individuals or groups who wish to use the schools for the purpose of publicizing trips or recruiting participants and parents/chaperones may do so in accordance with the Board's facilities use policy. Individuals or groups wishing to distribute promotional materials may do so only in accordance with Board policy. Non-school-sponsored trips must not be represented as school functions or as related to, or an extension of, the District's school unit's instructional, co-curricular or extracurricular programs.

It is the responsibility of any staff engaging in such trips or activities to notify the parents of prospective and participating students that this is not a school activity, but an independent voluntary trip organized or lead by that teacher or staff member. To minimize any risk of misunderstanding, the following statement must be made in any informational meetings or materials promoting the trip:

“This trip is not approved or sponsored by the Sanford School Department. It has not been reviewed, approved or endorsed by authorized Sanford School Department administrators and it is not covered by any of Sanford School Department’s insurance policies.”

Cross Reference: IICA-R – Field Trip and Excursion Administrative Procedure
EEAD – Special Use of school Busses – Vehicles
EEBB – Use of Private Vehicles on School Business

Approved: June 17, 1996
Revised: March 23, 2009, March 5, 2012
Revised: First reading: March 18, 2019
Approved: Second reading: April 1, 2019