



## Regulation of the Chancellor

Number: A-670

Subject: SCHOOL TRIPS

Category: STUDENTS

Issued: September 22, 2022

### SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This regulation supersedes Chancellor's Regulation A-670 dated September 21, 2018.

#### Changes:

- Updates "Office of Legal Services" to "Senior Field Counsel" (Section I.E) or "Office of the General Counsel" (Sections II.C.1 and V).
- Updates "Field Support Center Manager of Operational Support at the Field Support Center (Operations Manager)" to "Superintendent Team" (Sections I.F. and VII).
- Clarifies the Trip Plan requirement, including that Trip Plans must include information about student medical needs (Section II.A).
- Adds Section II.A.3 regarding reasonable accommodation(s) for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or Section 504 Plan.
- Updates Section II.A.7 regarding transportation and adds consistent language as Section III.B.
- Updates and relocates the footnote regarding translations to Section II.C.2.
- Clarifies that Section II.D.10 refers to the siblings of students whose parents are accompanying them on a class trip "and who are not part of the participating class(es)."
- Updates the information for schools to request a bus for a school trip from the Office of Pupil Transportation (Section III.A.4.b).
- Relocates the four attachments to this regulation to a separate webpage.
- Otherwise updates or reorganizes provisions of this regulation for clarity and accuracy.



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### ABSTRACT

This regulation sets forth the policy and procedures governing school trips. A school trip is defined as any authorized field trip off school premises, regardless of the destination or method of transportation used. All building administrators and staff should familiarize themselves with this regulation to ensure that school trips will be productive, enjoyable, and safe experiences for students, parents, and staff.

#### **I. OBJECTIVES**

- A. School trips afford students the opportunity to observe, explore, discover, and engage in hands-on experiences. Schools may sponsor trips before, during or after school hours.
- B. All school trips should have an educational or appropriate celebratory focus and be viewed as an extension of the curriculum and the learning environment.
- C. For all school trips, the principal shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate care is taken to ensure the safety of all participants.
- D. This regulation applies to trips sponsored by the New York City Department of Education (DOE) over which the DOE assumes primary supervision and control.
- E. The regulation and the consent forms (available at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/policies/chancellors-regulations/frequently-used-documents>) do not apply to situations where a school regularly provides offsite coursework and/or physical education. In such cases, the school must provide appropriate notice to the parents and exercise appropriate supervision and caution. This regulation does not cover student exchange or homestay programs. Such programs require the written consent of the Superintendent. Appropriate consent forms and trip documentation must be developed for such programs in consultation with the Superintendent and Senior Field Counsel assigned to the school.

- F. When a trip is sponsored by a Parent Association/Parent Teacher Association or other outside group that has a relationship to the school, a school must consult with its Superintendent Team and/or Senior Field Counsel to determine whether the trip is a DOE trip (in which case the requirements set forth in this regulation apply) or whether it is an independently run trip.
- G. When it is determined that the trip is independently run, parents must be explicitly informed that this is not a DOE-sponsored trip and all documentation relating to the trip must so indicate.
- H. When planning a trip which will be paid, in whole or in part, by an outside organization, refer to Chancellor's Regulation C-110 regarding compliance with conflict of interest rules on travel expenses. Questions regarding this matter should be referred to the DOE's Ethics Officer.

## II. PLANNING AND LOGISTICS

### A. Planning

- 1. All school trips must be approved in advance by the principal. Trips organized by special programs within the schools (e.g., clubs) are considered school trips and must be authorized in advance by the principal consistent with this regulation.
- 2. International trips must also be approved in advance by the appropriate Superintendent. Prior to approving the trip, the Superintendent must determine whether there are any travel warnings or advisories for the country/countries the students will be visiting. (See [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov); [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).) If there are such travel advisories or warnings, the Superintendent must consult with the Chancellor or the Chancellor's designee prior to making a determination whether to approve the trip.
- 3. Consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-710 (available at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/a-710>) the principal/designee must ensure that students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or Section 504 Plan receive reasonable accommodation(s) as needed in order to participate in the trip on an equal basis with their peers who do not have disabilities.
- 4. A Trip Plan, with detailed itinerary attached, must be prepared using the "Trip Plan" form (available at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/policies/chancellors-regulations/frequently-used-documents>) and retained in the school files for all trips. The Trip Plan must specify all information, including persons in charge, participating classes of students and any medical needs, lodging, activities, and locations to be visited, the names of all adults taking part, details of departure and return, method of transportation and carrier, and insurance coverage.

5. The principal/designee must ensure that every student and staff member participating in an international trip has the appropriate documentation (e.g., passport) for travel to the country/countries being visited and for return to the United States. This is particularly important for students traveling with non-U.S. passports.
  6. The principal/designee must ensure that at least one of the staff members accompanying the students on an international trip carries a phone with international service.
  7. Students with transportation recommended on their IEP and/or Section 504 Plan must be provided with transportation and accommodations consistent with their needs.
  8. Planning for students with medical needs, and for medical emergencies and contingencies, must be reflected in the Trip Plan. Adult supervisors should travel with first aid kits, telephone numbers for emergency services in the area, and students' emergency home contact numbers.
  9. When planning a trip, staff should inquire whether government or school rates are available for lodging, transportation, etc. Tax exempt status should always be requested, and proof of that exemption should be included in communications with suppliers.
  10. Prior to approving a trip in which swimming will be involved, the principal/designee must ensure that a lifeguard will be on duty at all times students are permitted to swim. No swimming may be permitted unless there is a lifeguard on duty.
  11. For trips of a celebratory nature, schools must fundraise to meet the costs of the trip.
- B. Fees
- Fees, such as the cost of admissions and lodging, must not be excessive. A student may not be excluded due to an inability to pay the required fee. Where appropriate, schools may assist students in financial need so that they will be able to participate.
- C. Parental Notification, Consent Forms and Documentation
1. Parents must be notified in writing in advance of the planned trip, and a parental consent form is required for each school trip. Schools must use the applicable consent forms hyperlinked under Chancellor's Regulation "A-670" on the DOE Frequently Used Documents (<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/policies/chancellors-regulations/frequently-used-documents>) webpage. Any changes or modifications to these forms must be approved in advance by the Office of the General Counsel.

2. Any notifications to parents shall be provided in a manner consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-663 (Translations, <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/a-663-english>).
  3. No student under the age of eighteen years of age will be allowed to participate in a school trip unless their parent, guardian, or person in a parental or custodial relationship to the student has signed a consent form allowing the student to participate (see <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/policies/chancellors-regulations/frequently-used-documents>). A student who is eighteen years of age or older, or an emancipated minor, may give consent themselves.
  4. Consent forms must identify activities with inherent risks (e.g., swimming, horseback riding, ice skating, use of physical fitness equipment) that students will engage in on the trip and must contain specific requests for parent permission to engage in those activities. If medical pre-clearance is required for a student to take part in the trip and/or participate in certain activities, it must be obtained in advance of the trip.
- D. Supervision
1. The principal must designate a licensed teacher, assistant principal, or other supervisor participating in the trip as the individual with overall responsibility for the trip. For trips related to substance abuse programs, Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialists who are regularly in charge of students may be designated as the individuals with overall responsibility for the trip.
  2. Appropriate supervision must be provided at every stage of a school trip.
  3. For all trips, staff members accompanying the students must come from the school sponsoring the trip. The principal, in their discretion, may approve requests that staff from another school accompany students.
  4. Where a trip involves activities with inherent risks (e.g., swimming, horseback riding, skiing, ice skating, use of physical fitness equipment), the principal/designee must ensure that there is appropriate adult supervision while the student engages in the activity.
  5. Protective equipment must be provided when appropriate to the activity (e.g., helmets for horseback riding).
  6. Ratio of Staff to Students
    - a) Routine day trips within New York City:

For elementary and middle school students, at least one (1) staff member and two (2) additional adults are required for up to thirty (30) students. For high school students, at least one (1) staff member and one (1) additional adult are required for up to thirty (30) students. The required staff member must be a teacher or a

supervisor. The other adult(s) may be a parent volunteer or a member of the instructional staff (e.g., teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide.

At the elementary level, for each additional ten (10) students, an additional adult is required. At the middle and high school levels, for each additional fifteen (15) students participating, an additional adult is required.

b) One day out-of-the-city or overnight trips:

For elementary, middle and high school students, at least two (2) staff members and one (1) adult are required for up to thirty (30) students. With respect to the two staff members noted above, one must be a teacher or supervisor. The other staff member may be a member of the instructional staff (e.g., teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide. The other (1) adult may be a parent volunteer or a member of the instructional staff (e.g., teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide.

At the elementary level, for each additional ten (10) students, an additional adult is required. At the middle and high school levels, for each additional fifteen (15) students participating, an additional adult is required.

c) International trips

At least two (2) staff members and one (1) other adult are required for up to fifteen (15) students. With respect to the two staff members noted above, one must be a teacher or supervisor. The other staff member may be a member of the instructional staff (e.g., teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide. The other one (1) adult may be a parent volunteer or a member of the instructional staff (e.g., teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide. For each additional ten (10) students participating, an additional adult is required.

d) Students with IEPs

For school trips involving students with IEPs, the ratio of staff to students should be at least the same as the ratio mandated for their classes.

7. Additional Requirements for Swimming and Water Based Activities
  - a) Ratio of Staff to Students for Swimming and Water Based Activities

If students will be swimming or will participate in water based activities (e.g., rowing, kayaking) the following ratios must be used:

    - (1) For elementary and middle school students, at least two (2) staff members and two (2) adults are required for up to thirty (30) students.
    - (2) For high school students, at least two (2) staff members and two (2) adults are required for up to thirty (30) students.
    - (3) With respect to the staff member(s) noted above, one (1) must be a teacher or supervisor. The other staff member may be a member of the instructional staff (e.g., teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide.
    - (4) The other two (2) adults noted above may be parent volunteers or members of the instructional staff (e.g., teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or paraprofessionals or school aides.
    - (5) At the elementary level, for each additional ten (10) students, two (2) adults are required. At the middle and high school levels, for each additional fifteen (15) students, two additional adults are required.
  - b) Students may only be permitted to swim when a lifeguard is on duty. The lifeguard must be on duty the entire time that students are swimming.
  - c) Students who participate in water based activities other than swimming such as kayaking, tubing, or rowing must wear a lifejacket at all times.
  - d) For international trips, the principal/designee must ensure that there is adult supervision appropriate to the activities in which the students engage.
8. If a student must leave a school trip prematurely, they must be accompanied by a staff person if a parent cannot come for the student.
9. Regardless of the type of trip, it is not permissible for students to meet at or be dismissed from a site other than the school unless the consent form specifically authorizes it. The principal or their designee must assume overall responsibility for receiving returning students. In cases where intervening circumstances make it impossible for the students to be dismissed from the agreed upon site, parent(s) must be contacted and advised of the situation and appropriate school staff must remain with the student(s) until such time as the parent(s) arrives. If a parent fails to pick up their child and repeated attempts to reach a parent or contact person

are unsuccessful, the principal or their designee must contact the nearest police precinct.

10. Siblings of students whose parents are accompanying them on a class trip, and who are not part of the participating class(es), are not permitted to take part in the trip.

E. Emergency Circumstances

1. Missing Students

- a) If one (1) or more students cannot be accounted for at a trip site, the authorities with jurisdiction over the site must be notified immediately, and a search organized. If, following the search, the student(s) cannot be located, local police must be called immediately. The staff member in charge must make every effort to contact the parents, as well as their supervisor.
- b) A staff member must remain at the site until all the students are accounted for. The staff member in charge shall determine whether other students and adults should leave the site. All such decisions shall be made in consultation with the staff member's supervisor. Parents should be kept updated as to the status of the search for their child.

2. Illness/Injury

- a) If a student becomes ill or is injured and is in need of assistance, appropriate health officials should be notified immediately. A determination must be made by health officials regarding the severity of the illness or injury, and if hospitalization is required, an adult must accompany the student. The parents must be notified immediately and advised of the location of their child (e.g., hospital) and the nature of the illness or injury.
- b) The staff member in charge shall determine whether other students and adults shall leave the site, but a staff member must remain until the ill or injured student is able to leave. All such decisions shall be made in consultation with the staff member's supervisor. Parents must be informed about their child's condition if they are not able to travel to the site.

**III. TRANSPORTATION**

A. Schools may use any of the following means of transportation:

1. Public transit systems (e.g., subways, buses);
2. Registered commercial airlines;
3. Intercity buses or transit systems (e.g., Amtrak, Greyhound); and/or
4. Private authorized buses, including school buses, as set forth below:



- a) Any vehicle utilized to transport students must comply with all federal, state, city, and DOE rules and regulations for the transport of students. This shall include, but is not limited to, standards established for vehicles, drivers, insurance, and companies. The Office of Pupil Transportation must be contacted to obtain a list of companies which provide service in compliance with these standards.
- b) To request a bus for a school trip from the Office of Pupil Transportation, schools should follow the instructions shared with all schools prior to the start of each school year about the procedures for obtaining buses for trips.
- c) Students may not be transported to or from the trip site on an unauthorized or private vehicle.

B. As explained above, students with transportation recommended on their IEP and/or Section 504 Plan must be provided with transportation and accommodations consistent with their needs.

#### **IV. INSURANCE AND INDEMNIFICATION**

- A. For school trips in which students engage in high-risk activities (e.g., swimming, horseback riding, skiing, ice skating, use of physical fitness equipment), schools should have on file documentation that the facilities which the student will be visiting have a general comprehensive liability insurance policy in an amount not less than \$2,000,000 per occurrence and written assurance from the facility that health, fire, and safety standards conform to those required by their locality for the use of persons four-twenty-one years of age. In the event that such documentation is not received, the principal shall determine whether it is appropriate to proceed with the trip. Emergency medical group insurance must be purchased to cover all participants in international trips.
- B. If a facility asks for proof of insurance or asks the DOE to indemnify the facility for acts committed by DOE employees, students, or invitees that occur during the school trip, the principal/designee must contact the Senior Field Counsel assigned to the school and may not sign any document regarding indemnification without the Senior Field Counsel's approval.
- C. All questions regarding insurance and indemnification should be referred to the appropriate Senior Field Counsel.

**V. LIABILITY**

Pursuant to New York State law, DOE staff, and authorized volunteers, may be entitled to legal representation and indemnification in connection with claims arising from acts or omissions while the employee/volunteer was acting within the scope of their public employment and in the discharge of their duties, and was not in violation of any rule or regulation of the DOE at the time the alleged act or omission occurred. In the event of a lawsuit naming a DOE employee/volunteer, the DOE Office of the General Counsel must be contacted at 212-374-6888 to request representation from the New York City Office of the Corporation Counsel.

**VI. WAIVER**

This regulation or any portion thereof may be waived by the Chancellor or their designee if it is determined to be in the best interests of the NYC school district.

**VII. INQUIRIES**

Inquiries regarding this regulation should be addressed to: the appropriate Superintendent Team, available at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/leadership/district-leadership>.