

School Sponsored Field Trip Policy

Board Policy #: 1

Adopted/Ratified: 6/25/2020

Revision Date:

1. AUTHORITY

A. The Cottonwood High School (“TCS,” “School,” or the “Charter School”) site-based high school can authorize field trips or excursions in connection with courses of instruction or school-related social, educational, cultural and leadership activities to and from places in the state, any other state, the District of Columbia, or a foreign country for students enrolled at TCS. A field trip or excursion to and from a foreign country may be permitted to familiarize students with the language, history, geography, natural sciences, and other studies relative to the school’s course of study for such student.

B. The Charter School may charge a fee for field trips and excursions pursuant Education Code section 35330. However, the Charter School will endeavor to keep the costs of any field trips affordable for all students’ families. TCS site-based high school must make sure that no student shall be prevented from making the field trip or excursion because of lack of sufficient funds. In accordance with Education Code section 35330(b), the Charter School will coordinate the efforts of community service groups to supply funds for students in need.

2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Each proposed trip shall have a certificated staff member who is responsible for:

- i. Ensuring all field trips related to the Schools’ educational objectives and forms are completed and on file at the Charter School site, office, or other work location of the trip sponsor.
- ii. Obtaining appropriate approvals before undertaking any off-campus activity. Approval is always needed from the Principal or designee at least two (2) weeks in advance. The Principal or designee will not approve any activity considered inherently dangerous to students. Additional approval may be needed from the Governing Board.
- iii. Ensuring that each field trip has been funded to cover all costs associated with the field trip.
- iv. Developing a communication protocol, in the event of emergency, that shall be attached to all field trip requests.

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v. Delivering a copy of the summary sheet for field trips (including chaperone contact phone numbers) to the site administrator.

vi. Procuring an appropriate communication device for any trip to a destination without cell phone service or other form of immediate communication.

vii. All field trips must be supervised by at least one certificated staff member. Ratio of adults to students shall be adequate to the activities undertaken, and specific requirements of the trip. Recommended ratios of adults to students: 7 to 1 for overnight trips; and 15 to 1 for day trips.

B. The lead certificated staff member is responsible for ensuring that:

i. All forms have been filled out properly by the field trip coordinator and permission forms have been collected for each trip from the parent/legal guardian of every participating student over the age of 18 prior to departure. (A duplicate set of all forms to be kept on file at the School.) Each permission slip must indicate the exact destination(s), the mode(s) of transportation, departure and arrival times for the field trip, emergency phone number for the student, any medications that the student is taking, any medications the student is allergic to, any additional medical information, and a waiver. (see forms). Whenever a trip involves water activities, the parent/guardian shall provide specific permission for his/her child to participate in the water activities.

ii. Proper transportation is provided. At all times during the field trip or excursion the safest mode of transportation and the safest and most direct routes of travel Private vehicle shall not be used for travel to any school related event. Parents may transport their own student with prior approval from the Principal.

iii. Chaperones are recruited, if needed and must be 21 years of age or older. All chaperones and/or parents accompanying students on the field trip must be fingerprinted. Siblings are not allowed to accompany parents chaperoning on a school field trip.

iv. Certificates of insurance are obtained from or issued to any organizations involved in the field trip, if applicable. The Charter School provides student accident insurance which covers medical expenses arising from student injuries on campus or while participating in a Charter School-sponsored off campus activity. The family's health insurance is primary, but if there is no health insurance, the Charter School's Student Accident Insurance becomes primary. Information and applications for student accident insurance are available from the Principal. The cost incurred by the Charter School shall be covered by the pupil or his or her parent or guardian.

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v. Establish and communicate the expectations for student behavior and staff responsibility for adult chaperones for all trips outside campus, including required dress, equipment and procedures.

vi. Field trip approval requests are sent in a timely fashion meeting required deadlines, including adequate time to obtain Board approval, if necessary. In addition, any changes to the previously submitted field trip information must be reported.

vii. Adequate restroom facilities, food and water will be available during the activity

viii. There is a designated point of contact at the School for emergencies. Any injuries or unusual incidents occurring during the field trip or excursion will be documented in writing by the coordinating teacher and given to the Charter School's Principal.

ix. A first aid kit shall be in the possession of or immediately available to a teacher, employee, or agent of the school during the student field trip or excursion. Whenever trips are conducted in areas known to be infested with poisonous snakes, the first aid kit taken on the trip shall contain medically accepted snakebite remedies. In addition, a teacher, employee, or agent of the school who has completed a first aid course which is certified by the American Red Cross and which emphasizes the treatment of snakebites shall participate in the trip.

C. TCS site-based High School does not authorize field trips which occur after graduation.

3. OVERNIGHT, OUT OF STATE & FOREIGN TRAVEL FIELD TRIPS

In addition to the General Requirements listed above the following requirements apply to Overnight, Out of State and Foreign Travel Field Trips:

A. For all overnight field trips, the field trip sponsor must prepare a Request for Overnight Field Trip Form.

B. All overnight field trips must be accompanied by at least one certificated staff member. Ratio of adults to students shall be adequate to the activities undertaken, age of the students, and specific requirements of the trip. Recommended ratio of adults to students is 1 to 7 for overnight trips; it is preferable to have adults of both genders as chaperones.

C. If students will be divided into smaller chaperoned groups on the trip, a staff person must remain reasonably proximate to each group throughout the trip.

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D. Board approval for overnight, out-of-state and out-of-country student trips must be submitted at least two months prior to the trip so that there is sufficient time for Board approval. The approval must contain the following information:

- i. Site name
- ii. Educational purpose of trip
- iii. Number of student participants
- iv. Length of trip
- v. Destination
- vi. Names of certificated employees accompanying students
- vii. Source of funding
- viii. Description of student selection process
- ix. An affirmation that parental permission forms are on file for all students participating

E. The Request for Overnight Field Trip Form must be signed by the trip sponsor, the site administrator and approved by The Board.

F. All adults taking out-of-state field trips or excursions, and all parents or guardians of pupils taking out-of-state field trips or excursions are required to sign a statement waiving all claims against TCS, its employees, and the State of California for injury, accident, illness or death occurring during or by reason of the field trip or excursion.

4. EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION FIELD TRIPS

In addition to General Requirements, and Overnight Requirements, Out of State/Foreign Travel Requirements (if applicable), the following requirements apply for Experiential Education Field Trips:

A. Copies of the following documents must be provided with the request for approval for all Experiential Field Trips (including day trips):

- i. Field Manual
- ii. Emergency call guide & communication action plan
- iii. Map of area(s) & itinerary for travel to any remote locations

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B. If students will be divided into smaller groups on the trip, a chaperone with an appropriate background check and demonstrated knowledge and experience relative to the specific trip environment must remain reasonably proximate to each group throughout the trip.

5. CHAPERONES

A. If agreement has been reached with the supervising facilitator, volunteers 21 years of age or older may chaperone students on field trips if they have complied with all TCS requirements pertaining to the chaperoning of students. Staff must remain reasonably proximate to volunteer chaperones at all times.

B. Overnight chaperones must comply with school volunteer requirements including but not limited to fingerprinting or Livescan and TB Test.

C. Chaperones must be familiar with TCS policy before attending the field trip.

D. Chaperones must ensure that no adults or students partake of any alcohol or controlled substances (except for medications taken under a physician's order).

E. There will be no smoking on the part of chaperones and students, including students who have reached the age of majority.

F. Chaperones on overnight trips are responsible for ensuring that the students are in their hotel room at a set curfew time, not roaming the hotel creating noise and infringing on the rights of other hotel patrons.

G. Chaperones must understand that they share responsibility for the actions of their charges. Any damage inflicted on property or persons will be the responsibility of the students and the chaperones of the students that committed the offense. Any agreement to make restitution will be the responsibility of the chaperones.

H. Out of concern for the privacy interests of high school students and the appearance of impropriety, chaperones will not go into rooms of high school students, except to make periodic bed checks. However, these chaperones must walk the halls of the hotel at night at regular intervals.

5. WAIVER

All persons making the field trip or excursion shall be deemed to have waived all claims against the Charter School or the State of California for injury, accident, illness, or death occurring during or by reason of the field trip or excursion. All adults taking out-of-state field trips or excursions and all parents/guardians of students taking out-of-state field trips or excursions shall sign a statement waiving such claims.

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6. VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

The Charter School will provide alternative educational activities to those students who choose not to attend a specific field trip or excursion. Parents/guardians will have advance notice of any upcoming field trip or excursion and have the option to withdraw their permission for their child to attend that field trip or excursion.