

**CODE: IJOA**

**OFF-SITE STUDENT EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL** (*formally known as: Field Trips & Other Student Travel*)

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The School Committee recognizes the educational value of school-sponsored trips as a means of supplementing 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.

This policy provides guidance for the various kinds of trips that may be sponsored by the Kittery schools.

**Field Trips**

“Field trip” means a trip that takes place during the school day and is organized and conducted by one or more Kittery School District employees as a means of accomplishing particular curriculum objectives. All students within the class or grade, or curriculum related subgroup within a class, will be eligible to participate.

Field trips must be approved in advance by the building principal and the Superintendent.

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

- A. Objectives of the proposed trip and the anticipated learning outcomes;
- B. Specific learning activities to be experienced during the trip;
- C. Suitability of the activity and distance traveled to the age of students;
- D. Mode and availability of transportation, with school bus transportation arranged so as not to disrupt school bus schedules;
- E. Arrangements for meals (if applicable);
- F. Availability of funding for all necessary expenses through the school budget and/or other appropriate sources.
- G. Arrangements for students/families who cannot commit to the anticipated costs.

In addition the School Committee requires that:

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

- B. Adequate supervision be provided to maintain discipline and safety and to respond to emergencies; and
- C. Students participating in field trips conduct themselves in a manner consistent with School Committee policies and school rules.
- D. Any overnight curriculum-related trip must be approved by the School Committee.

### **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. Any competition trip that is outside of those regularly scheduled for the year must be approved in advance by the Superintendent. 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 Kittery School District 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. 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 School Committee must approve, in advance, all overnight and international trips. Approval may be contingent upon availability of funding from the school budget and other sources. Preliminary concept approval shall be at least 60 days prior to the event.

Staff or administrators seeking final approval for school-sponsored trips must furnish the following information no less than two weeks prior to the event:

- A. Objectives of the trip and anticipated outcomes;
- B. Specific experiences to be provided;
- C. Number and grade(s) of students;
- D. Criteria for selecting students for participation:

- E. Maximum number of students who may participate;
- F. Cost per student, including funds requested from the Kittery School District and from individual students;
- G. Fundraising plans and arrangements for financial assistance(if applicable);
- H. Transportation arrangements;
- I. Itinerary;
- J. Arrangements for meals and lodging;
- K. Arrangements for adult supervision/chaperons, with a minimum ratio of 10;1
- 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 School Committee policies and school rules. Students who violate School Committee policy or school rules will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

### **School-Promoted Non-School-Sponsored Learning Experiences**

From time to time, exciting, relevant, and legitimate learning opportunities are presented to school personnel. Some may involve travel and even an overnight stay. Examples may include, but not limited to:

- *Rotary Youth Leadership Awakening Camp through Rotary*
- *MYL training through Maine Youth Leadership*
- *Dirigo Girls and Boys State through the American Legion*
- *United Nations Trip to NYC through Rotary/Interact*
- *Keller Bloom Program through Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences*
- *Week at Sea through Piscataqua Maritime Commission*

School personnel must take due diligence before recommending the opportunity to students and families. Specifically, school officials must check out the opportunity (call the organization in charge of the event) to determine that is legitimate and reputable. School personnel are expected to speak with other students and their families who have participated in a similar opportunity with this same organization.

The school must make it clear that such opportunities, though thoroughly vetted and promoted by the school, are **non-school-sponsored opportunities** and are, therefore, not covered by any of the Kittery School District's insurance policies.

### **Non-School-Sponsored Travel**

Travel organized by Kittery School Committee 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 School Committee accepts no responsibility for non-school-sponsored trips, and organizers should be aware that such trips or excursions 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 School Committee 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.

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 School Committee's facilities use policy. Individuals or groups wishing to distribute promotional materials may do so only in accordance with School Committee policy. Non-school-sponsored trips must not be represented as school functions or as related to, or an extension of, the Kittery School District's instructional, co-curricular or extracurricular programs.

It is the responsibility of any staff or other 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 staff member or parent. 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 Kittery School Committee. It has not been reviewed, approved or endorsed by authorized Kittery School District administrators and it is not covered by any of the Kittery School District’s insurance policies.”*

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Cross Reference:      EEAG - Use of Private Vehicles or School Buses  
                                 KHB – Advertising in the Schools  
                                 KHC - Distribution/Posting of Non-School Materials  
                                 JEA – Compulsory Attendance  
                                 JEAA – Student Attendance

Adopted:                      June 1986

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