

## FIELD TRIPS PROCEDURES

The Regional School Board recognizes the value of students visiting off-campus locations during the school day in order to enhance their understanding of the approved curriculum. Because such visitations substitute for in-class instruction, they must relate directly to and be aligned with the approved curriculum. The approved curriculum shall include, but not be limited to, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, core values and other skills relating to good citizenship. Using time within the school day for students to visit an off-campus location in order to enhance their understanding of the curriculum shall be referred to as a field trip for purposes of this policy.

### A. Approval for Field Trips

1. **Requirements for partial and one-day trips within Virginia.** In addition to requirements stated elsewhere in this policy, partial and one-day field trips within the Commonwealth of Virginia, where students leave and return on the same day, require the prior written approval of the executive director or the executive director's designee.

In addition, the executive director, the director of student activities, or a designee shall state in writing the details of any such partial and one-day trip – including, but not limited to, any higher-risk activities such as swimming where no properly-trained lifeguard is present. Adequate safeguards must be in place for any such higher risk activity, or students will not be permitted to engage in the higher risk activity.

2. **Requirements for overnight trips (regardless of whether the trip is in Virginia).** In addition to requirements stated elsewhere in this policy, all overnight field trips require the prior written approval of the executive director or his/her designee

In addition, the executive director, the director of student activities, or a designee shall state in writing the details of any such trip – including, but not limited to, any higher-risk activities such as swimming where no properly-trained lifeguard is present. Adequate safeguards must be in place for any such higher risk activity, or students will not be permitted to engage in the higher risk activity.

3. **Requirements for school sponsored out-of-state and school sponsored out-of-country trips.** In addition to requirements stated elsewhere in this policy, all out-of-state and out-of-country trips require the prior written approval of the executive director or his/her designee. All school-sponsored out-of-country trips also require the additional approval of the Regional School Board. As a result, all such trips shall be planned well in advance to accommodate the time needed for making suitable travel and other arrangements, and for securing required approvals.

4. **Requirements for all field trips.** In addition to requirements stated elsewhere in this policy, instructional staff shall seek required approvals, as set forth above, prior to scheduling or making other arrangements for a field trip. Among other factors, the executive director or the executive director's designee shall consider the extent to

which a proposed field trip relates to, aligns with and enhances the approved curriculum, as well as the overall educational value of the proposed trip. The executive director or the executive director's designee shall also consider the length of the proposed trip; the distance, time and expense involved, if any; as well as the complexity of travel and other arrangements, prior to approving any field trip.

The executive director or the executive director's designee shall not approve a field trip unless he or she is satisfied that adequate safety precautions have been made and will be observed during all phases of the trip, and unless he or she has determined that the number of adults scheduled to accompany students during the trip is adequate to provide for student supervision and safety. In making such determinations, the executive director or the executive director's designee shall consider the age of and any special needs of students participating in the field trip, as well as the location and nature of the field trip, among other factors. The executive director shall also take into consideration whether sufficient male and female adult supervisors are scheduled to accompany students during the trip. Under no circumstances will one student be permitted to be chaperoned by one adult, regardless of the gender of the chaperone and student.

Any instructional staff member who has received approval for a field trip shall ensure that it is used for the purpose of enhancing students' understanding of the approved curriculum or have a substantial connection to the mission of Maggie L. Walker Governor's School. All trips shall require prior written approvals as set forth in Sections A.1, A.2, A.3 and A.4 herein. Some activities during field trips may be conducted only by properly contracted and insured vendors. Instructional staff shall identify on the Field Trip Approval Form activities such as kayaking, canoeing, charter boats, ropes courses, swimming where no properly-trained lifeguard is present, and other similar higher-risk activities, so that proper insurance and safety measures can be confirmed.

#### B. Student Conduct During Field Trips

Notwithstanding the fact that field trips require students to leave the school's campus, the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School (MLWGS) Standards for Student Conduct shall nonetheless govern student conduct during all such trips. Therefore, among other things, instructional staff shall monitor the purchase of gifts including, but not limited to, weapon replicas that are prohibited under the Code of Virginia.

#### C. Adult Conduct During Field Trips

Employees who accompany students on a field trip are subject to Regional School Board policies and shall comport themselves in a professional and responsible manner during the entirety of the field trip. Adult volunteers who are asked to accompany students on a field trip are also expected to behave in a responsible manner during the entirety of the field trip, and shall be subject to the direction of school employees, this policy, and the requirements of Policy 6001 - *Volunteers*, for the duration of the trip.

The primary responsibilities of school employees who accompany students on a field trip shall be the facilitation of student learning, the safety and supervision of students, and the safety of other adults on the trip. Therefore, school employees who accompany students on any field

trip, including, but not limited to, overnight trips, shall at all times during the trip be able to respond professionally, capably, and responsibly to an emergency or any other situation involving a student or other adult chaperone.

#### D. Duration of Field Trips

Generally, field trips should be confined to a single school day. All overnight trips – regardless of whether the destination is in-state, out-of-state, or out-of-country – require the written pre-approval of the executive director or the executive director’s designee. Where the purpose of the field trip necessitates that students be gone overnight, the trip shall be limited to the fewest number of days possible for students to meet the objectives of the trip.

#### E. Transportation

Arrangements for field trip transportation must be made in advance. Only properly-procured and insured modes of transportation with properly licensed operators shall be used to transport students and adults during field trips. Such transportation shall be approved by the executive director or the executive director’s designee and shall include commercial carriers. With prior approval of the executive director or the executive director’s designee, school-owned vans and buses may be used to transport students and adults on a field trip, provided that any such vehicle must be operated by a licensed driver.

#### F. Out-of-State and Out-of-Country Trips

All out-of-state and out-of-country trips, regardless of the age of students participating in the trip and regardless of the trip’s duration, require the prior written approval of the executive director or his/her designee. All out-of-country trips also require the approval of the executive director or the executive director’s designee and the Regional School Board. No staff member may make any arrangements for an out-of-state and out-of-country trip – including, but not limited to, requiring students to make non-refundable deposits - prior to receiving the necessary approvals in writing. The executive director or the executive director’s designee shall also indicate the required number of teacher and other adult chaperones, including the number of male and female chaperones who must accompany students on the trip.

#### G. Fundraising

No fundraising efforts to support a field trip may commence until the field trip has received all necessary approvals. All funds collected for a field trip must be placed in a special student activity account.

The executive director or the executive director’s designee may seek financial assistance for students who demonstrate need.

#### H. Cancellation

The executive director or the executive director's designee may cancel any field trip, including any out-of-state or out-of-country trip, at any time for safety or other reasons in his or her sole discretion.

I. Travel to Support Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities

Sections A - H of this policy shall apply to travel by athletic teams, dance squads, choruses, concert and other bands, show choirs – and other extracurricular and co-curricular activities sponsored by the school– including, but not limited to, travel to competitions, contest, exhibitions, and other similar activities.

J. Overseas and Other Student Travel Opportunities for Which High School Credit Is Awarded

Sections A – H of this policy shall apply to overseas and other travel opportunities for which high school graduation credit is awarded. In order to receive high school graduation credit, any such program must contain a rigorous study component.

K. Non-School Sponsored Student Travel Opportunities

Domestic non-school sponsored student travel opportunities are not authorized.

Adopted: January 19, 2017  
Amended: October 15, 2020  
Amended: April 15, 2021  
Amended: September 19, 2024

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Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-176.

Cross Ref: MLWGS Course Catalog  
Pol 4001 Student Transportation  
Pol 4006 Field Trips  
Pol 6001 Volunteers  
Pol 6010 Use of School Facilities  
Proc 1070 Procedure for International Travel  
Proc 1071 Procedure for Non-School Sponsored International Travel  
Pol 7011 School Activity Funds  
Pol 8002.1 Standards for Student Conduct