
SCHOOL SPONSORED FIELD TRIPS & CULTURAL EXCURSIONS POLICY

Purpose

Excel Academy Charter Schools and its programs (“EACS” or “Charter School”) recognize that field trips sponsored by the Charter School are an important component of a student’s personalized learning plan. Besides supplementing and enriching learning experiences, such trips encourage new interests among students, make them more aware of community resources, and help them relate their learning to the outside world. Field trips shall be supported fiscally and encouraged as a regular part of the teaching curriculum by the Charter School.

The safety and security of our students is a primary priority when planning or participating in field trips. These activities will be carried out in an appropriate manner to maximize and ensure student safety and to minimize EACS’s legal liability and financial cost.

Definition

A “*field trip*” involves students participating in school sponsored educational opportunities in connection with EACS’s course of study or school related social, educational, cultural, athletic,, or other extracurricular or co-curricular activities.

Selection of Field Trips

The Community Team will continue to research and provide enriching learning opportunities to share with their students. The Executive Director shall have the authority to approve all in-state day (non-overnight) field trips. Requests for out of state, out of country, or overnight travel shall be brought before the Board of Directors for approval. The Executive Director will initially receive all such requests and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors as to whether the request should be approved.

The Executive Director will ensure that the following items will be adhered to for all EACS field trips:

1. The proposed field trip relates to EACS’s educational objectives
2. The correct ratio of adult to students is met for supervision of the activity
3. A means of transportation to and from the activity is provided by parents/guardians
4. Adequate restroom facilities will be available during the activity
5. Water is brought by the student if the facility allows beverages

The Executive Director shall not approve any activity that he/she considers to be inherently dangerous to students.

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1. **Field Trip Coordinator** – Each field trip shall have Charter School staff as chaperones in charge of the trip. The Field Trip Coordinator shall be responsible to complete the following:
 - a. Obtain approval of overnight field trips from the Executive Director. The Community Team works together to approve day trips.
 - b. For overnight/out of area field trips, prepare a proposal, including a complete description of the trip, preferred date, educational objective of the trip, costs and funding for the trip, and submit the proposal for Board approval.
 - c. Ensure that all required permission forms are properly completed and collected from the parent/legal guardian of every participating student prior to departure. Each permission slip must indicate with particularity the exact destination and date for the field trip.
 - d. Ensure that certificates of insurance are obtained from or issued to any organizations involved in the field trip, if applicable.
 - e. Establish and communicate the expectations for student behavior and staff responsibility for staff chaperones for all trips outside campus, including required equipment and procedures.
2. As the person responsible for all educational activities, it is the ultimate responsibility of the Field Trip Coordinator to ensure that:
 - a. Out of area and overnight field trip approval requests are sent to the Executive Director prior to booking the overnight trips - overnight trips are only for students - no siblings or parents are allowed to attend.
 - b. Chaperone groups and a communication protocol, in the event of emergency has been established.
 - c. Field trip permission forms are completed and accessible.
 - d. The ratio of adults to students shall be adequate to the activities undertaken, age of the students, and specific requirements of the trip. Recommended ratios of students to adults are 10 to 1.
 - e. Payment information is communicated to Student Services.

Participation

1. Approved participants for the general field trips shall include only students who are currently enrolled (on the date of the trip), siblings of a participating student (only if a parent/guardian also participates), parents/guardians, and Charter School employees.

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2. Field trip attendance is a privilege that may be revoked by the Executive Director based on student behavior or whose presence on the trip would pose a safety or disciplinary risk.

Permission Slips

Before a student can participate in a school-sponsored trip, the Field Trip Coordinator shall obtain parent/guardian permission for the trip. Whenever a trip involves water activities, the parent/guardian shall provide specific permission for his/her child to participate in the water activities.

1. Parents/guardians should be notified at least two (2) weeks in advance of day field trips unless there are special circumstances approved by the Executive Director.
2. Parents/guardians should be notified at least four (4) weeks in advance of overnight field trips. The purpose of this notice is to inform parents/guardians of any special items, i.e., down sleeping bags, etc. they may need to borrow or purchase in order to outfit their student appropriately and to notify parents/guardians of estimated costs to allow time to budget for their financial contribution.

All persons making the field trip 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. All adults taking out-of-state field trips and all parents/guardians of students taking out-of-state field trips shall sign a statement waiving such claims. Parents/guardians of any siblings of EACS students also attending any field trips shall sign a statement waiving such claims.

Items that will be included on the permission slip are:

1. An emergency phone number for the student
2. Any medications the student is required to take with the time and dosage required
3. Any medications the student is allergic to
4. Any other medical information necessary to ensure the student's safety
5. Waiver as described above

Charter School staff will have access to completed and signed permission slips housed online.

Defraying Expenses of Field Trips

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EACS may charge a fee for field trips pursuant to section 35330 of the Education Code. However, EACS will endeavor to keep the costs of any field trips affordable for all students' families. In no event will a student be prevented from participating in the field trip due to lack of sufficient funds. In accordance with Education Code section 35330(b), EACS will coordinate the efforts of community service groups to supply funds for students in need.

Parents/guardians, siblings attending a specified field trip are expected to pay for their own trip. Payments will be accepted via Paypal or other methods as approved by the Charter School. NO CASH WILL BE ACCEPTED.

NO REFUND POLICY: Once field trip sign ups are completed, no refunds shall be provided.

Records

1. The Charter School shall maintain field trip records for each trip. Records may include trip approval, itineraries, and permission slips.

Safety and First Aid

1. The Executive Director shall ensure that the Field Trip Coordinator develops plans, which provide for the safety of students and their proper supervision by certificated staff on all school-sponsored trips. Other Charter School employees may participate in this supervision and may be asked to attend preparatory training sessions and/or meetings.
2. While conducting a trip, the school appointed chaperone(s) shall have the Charter School's first aid kit in their possession or immediately available.

Supervision of Field Trips

The Field Trip Coordinator will manage the Charter School staff chaperone sign up sheet and communicate with school staff regarding roles and responsibilities for each field trip. The Field Trip Coordinator will be designated as the emergency contact for the group on the field trip. Any injuries or unusual incidents occurring during the field trip will be documented in writing by the coordinating teacher and given to the Charter School's Executive Director.

The Executive Director shall ensure that the field trips have an adequate number of adults attending to safely supervise the student attending the field trip.

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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. In addition, employees of the Charter School will have completed a first aid course certified by Safe Schools.

Charter School employees and volunteers shall not consume alcohol or use controlled substances (except for medications taken under a physician's orders) while accompanying and supervising students on a field trip.

Accident Insurance

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, EACS's Student Accident Insurance becomes primary. Information and applications for student accident insurance are available from the Executive Director. The cost incurred by EACS shall be covered by the pupil or his or her parent or guardian.

Parent or Guardian Participation in Field Trips

As field trips are an integral part of the EACS learning experience, parents/guardians are requested to participate with their students.

Each parent or guardian will be responsible for his/her student at all times during the field trip. Under no circumstances will a parent or guardian consume alcohol or use controlled substances (except for medications taken under a physician's orders) during a field trip. The parent or guardian will notify the Field Trip Coordinator, in advance of the field trip, should he/she be under a physician's orders and using medications.

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

Transportation

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At all times during the field trip, teachers, staff, and parents will use the safest mode of transportation and the safest and most direct routes of travel. If travel is not by bus, the legal occupancy limit of ten (10) occupants (including the driver) must not be exceeded, all speed notices must be strictly adhered to and students are to be seated with individual seat belts at all times.

EACS shall take reasonable precautions to ensure that all employees and volunteers who transport students are responsible and capable operators of the vehicles to be used and ensure compliance with EACS Student Transportation Policy and Driver Requirements as follows:

Any person who transports any student other than their own child for a field trip must provide a copy of the following:

1. Proof of liability insurance for their vehicle with a minimum of \$100K/\$300K coverage.
2. A copy of their Driver's License and Vehicle Registration.

Each of these items will be provided to the Field Trip Coordinator prior to driving on a field trip. Under no circumstances shall students transport other students. Call the Charter School office immediately if there is a problem.

Overnight and Out-of-Area Field Trips

In addition to the responsibilities listed above, the following requirements apply to overnight and out of area field trips:

1. All overnight field trips must be accompanied by at least one certificated staff person.
2. Ratio of adults to students shall be adequate to the activities undertaken, age of the students, and specific requirements of the trip. Recommended ratios of students to adults are at least 10 to 1 for overnight trips.

Family Led Field Trips/Excursions

A family led field trip/excursion is defined as one that is organized and promoted by an outside organization or group other than EACS, whether or not it is of an educational value or is somehow connected to a particular course of study. This includes trips that are organized by an

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organization or group that may be affiliated with EACS (e.g., parent groups or organizations, cultural groups, etc.). The following guidelines apply to family led field trips and excursions:

1. Students will not receive credit/time value for family led field trips or excursions.
2. Teachers are not responsible for creating school work ahead of time.
3. Students must make up missed academic work.
4. EACS has no responsibility to provide travel.
5. Any employee of EACS who attends a non-school-sponsored field trip/excursion does so voluntarily and is not acting as an employee of EACS.
6. If a family led field trip/excursion is promoted on EACS property, email accounts and/or social media sites, all materials must clearly state that this is a family led field trip/excursion.
7. No insurance coverage will be provided by EACS.
8. EACS assumes no legal or financial responsibility for family led field trips and excursions.