

## Donna ISD Overnight Field Trip Expectations

**Students may be permitted to take school-sponsored trips for the following purposes:**

1. Activities of sanctioned clubs or organizations.
2. UIL or other sanctioned competitions, recognitions, or special invitational events.

Students who participate in school sponsored trips shall be required to ride in transportation provided by the school to and from the event. An exception may be made if the student's parent or guardian personally requests in writing that the student be allowed to ride with the parent or legal guardian. The District shall not be liable for any injuries that occur to students riding in vehicles that are not provided by the school. Sponsors may not transport students in their personal vehicles for these types of events.

All such trips will be in compliance with Board-approved basic guidelines governing trips and the *Donna ISD Student Code of Conduct* governing behavior of all participants. Additional rules and guidelines may be developed by the individual schools or sponsors to assist with maintaining high standards of safety and conduct. All rules will be distributed to students, parents, and chaperones prior to the event. Each school office will serve as a clearinghouse and repository for field trip information for its respective schools. Sponsors/chaperones will be responsible for ensuring that the District's procedures governing field trips are followed.

Teachers and central office personnel sponsoring field trips, excursions, or special activities requiring parental approval will have the appropriate form completed by the parent and on file prior to participation by the student. **Form A** in the appendix of this document is the District required form. Additional forms needed for satisfactory completion of arrangements may be required by the individual school or sponsor.

The sponsor for a Donna Independent School District (DISD) field trip or excursion will be approved by the principal and will accompany the group to, from, and during the function. The sponsor must be a school faculty or central office staff member and will have the following basic duties and responsibilities in facilitating a field trip or excursion:

### **Preparation**

The sponsor will review all Board policies and procedures as well as individual school rules governing trips and excursions prior to planning. All field trips require pre-planning on the part of the sponsor, the school, and the District. Sponsors are responsible for submitting a detailed itinerary for all time that students are in the care of the District. This is **Form B** in the Appendix.

### **Permission**

The sponsor will obtain pre-planning permission for the trip or excursion. Students and parents should not become involved in any preparation or activity relative to the trip until after the pre-planning permission has been granted by the principal or designee.

### **Coordination**

The sponsor will coordinate all plans and arrangements for the trip. He or she will compile a report using the Sponsor's Request for Approval of Field Trip form, including attachments as necessary, for presentation to the principal or designee and other appropriate administrator, if required.

### **Educational Purpose**

If the trip will involve loss of school time, the report will list specific learning activities to be accomplished by students either before they leave or as a part of their activities during the trip.

### **Transportation**

School buses may be used for field trips. [For specific guidelines regarding limits, time lines, special needs, cancellations, and changes, see Reference (i)] Private carrier companies with appropriate contracts and private passenger cars and vans with a rated passenger capacity of no more than ten persons (including the driver) may be used. Proof of automobile liability insurance is required for any private passenger vehicle utilized.

### **Finance**

The report should list the cost per student and how the trip will be financed. Students may participate in fund-raising activities to defray expenses. Fund-raising activities must conform to Board policy and District procedures, and all funds collected will be handled in accordance with Board policy.

Field trips required as part of a basic educational program or course will be provided by the District. Extracurricular and out-of-District trips will be paid for by the school.

### **Chaperones**

The sponsor will obtain at least the minimum number of chaperones required and will verify that chaperones who may have driving responsibilities have evidence of a valid Texas driver's license and automobile liability insurance. All chaperones who are not District employees will be referred to the principal's designee to register with Volunteers in Public Schools and will participate in the volunteer criminal history background check. Volunteers must clear the background check before they can begin volunteer work.

### **Students**

Students must be passing all subjects to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. The report will include a list of students going on the field trip with verification that the students are eligible to participate in the field trip in accordance with attendance and extracurricular activity policies.

### **Notification of School Personnel**

Sponsors must provide a list of students scheduled to participate in a field trip to teachers and attendance clerks so accurate attendance may be recorded.

### **No Travel During Exams**

Field trips may not be scheduled during state- or District-mandated exams without prior approval of the principal.

### **Safety Plan**

The sponsor will create a plan to ensure the safety and security of students. The safety plan should include, as a minimum, procedures to manage particular safety issues relative to the trip; identification and phone numbers of local emergency medical facilities and local police departments; and procedures to connect to the same as some areas may not support cellular phone use.

### **Approval**

The sponsor will request final approval from the principal in adequate advance time.

### **Parental Approval**

The sponsor will obtain signed parent approval forms for each student involved prior to participation by the student. If the trip is out-of-District, the sponsor must obtain any unusual medical information for students, which may be necessary in the event of an emergency.

### **Out-of-District or Long Trips**

If a trip is scheduled out-of-District or for an extended period, the sponsor will hold an orientation meeting for briefing parents, students, and chaperones; furnishing complete trip information; communicating basic responsibilities; and distributing written rules of safety and conduct to be followed. He or she will maintain a record of the meeting for review by the principal.

### **Student Profile**

The sponsor will maintain duplicate listings of all participating students with telephone numbers for reaching parents or guardians in the event of an emergency. He or she will leave one listing with the school and apprise the chaperone(s) of the location of the one retained by him or her.

### **Trip Responsibilities**

The sponsor has the responsibility, with the assistance of chaperones, for maintaining order, adhering to the schedule of the trip, and enforcing safety and conducting rules for the welfare of the students.

### **Supervision**

The sponsor will supervise and direct chaperones. In the event the principal is accompanying the group, the principal will maintain his or her customary role and will have final authority in any conflict of decision.

### **Discipline**

The sponsor will follow up immediately on all rule infractions observed or reported and notify campus administration.

### **Employee Conduct**

As a representative of the District, the sponsor will maintain exemplary conduct at all times and expect the same of the students.

### Chaperones

The purpose of chaperones is to assist the sponsor in maintaining high standards of safety and conduct.

#### Minimum Requirements

The minimum chaperone requirements are:

Elementary School — one chaperone per 12 students;

Middle School — one chaperone per 12 students; and

High School — one chaperone per 12 students.

**The following factors should be taken into consideration when providing additional chaperones:**

- Age of group;
- Size of group and manageability of students;
- Makeup of group (boys, girls, mixed); Any overnight trip with boys and girls shall have a male and female chaperone.
- Type of function and general environment (festive, quiet, routine, cultural, scholastic, spectator, participating);
- Amount of free or unplanned time to be available (this should always be kept to a minimum);
- Amount of mobility required for participation;
- Likelihood of a large group dividing into several smaller groups and going in different directions;
- Safety and security plan for students;
- Mode of transportation; and
- Length of trip or excursion (daytime only, overnight, extended).