

FIELD TRIP PROCEDURES

A “field trip” occurs when students leave school grounds for an educational purpose. It is a student trip for the purpose of curriculum related study (part of the classroom educational experience), MHSAs interscholastic athletics, co-curricular activities, outdoor education, or part of a school-sponsored club.

Types of field trips include:

- Day field trips
- Recurring field trips (same activity over and over on regular basis, such as a choir or sports game)
- Field trips with special hazards:
 - Near water or involving swimming or boating
 - In remote locations/hiking
 - Involving animals (farms, zoos, riding animals, etc.)
 - Involving outdoor education
- Extended field trips – overnight field trips or out of area (over 50 miles)
- Out of country field trips – At the beginning of each school year, MCPS shall send an [Annual Field Trip Consent Form](#) to the parents/guardians of each student within the district. This Annual Field Trip Consent Form shall cover all local field trips occurring within Missoula for the school year and shall be effective for one school year. If a student’s parent or guardian sign the Annual Field Trip Consent Form, a separate permission form is not required. MCPS shall maintain a record of all students whose parents/guardians submitted the Annual Field Trip Consent Form.

Pursuant to Board Policy 2320, building principals have developed procedures for field trips. Prior to each field trip, the teacher or sponsor will fill out and submit the [Travel Request Form](#) for approval.

- **Field trips of a distance exceeding 400 miles (one way):** Must be approved by the Superintendent/designee at least 60 days in advance.
- **Out of Country:** Superintendent/designee, Principal, Regional Director, and Board approval required 6 months in advance.
- **Building Principals:** May approve all other field trips.
- **Students earning the right to travel for competitions with less than 60 days’ notice:** will receive special consideration. – Upon approval of a local field trip by administration, the teacher or sponsor must provide each student for whom annual consent has been provided with the [Field Trip Opt-Out Form](#) explaining the details of the local field trip. A parent or guardian wishing to have their child excluded from the field trip must complete and sign the form. This “opt-out” shall only apply to the specific field trip, and the parent’s or guardian’s consent from the Annual Field Trip Consent form shall remain active. If a parent or guardian has not signed the Annual Field Trip Consent Form, the teacher or sponsor shall provide that student with a Field Trip Consent Form which must be completed and approved by the student’s parent or guardian before the student may participate in the field trip.

Upon approval of a local field trip by administration, the teacher or sponsor must provide each student for whom annual consent has been provided with the Field Trip Opt-Out Form explaining the details of the local field trip. A parent or guardian wishing to have their child excluded from the field trip must complete and sign the form. This “opt-out” shall only apply to the specific field trip, and the parent’s or guardian’s consent from the Annual Field Trip Consent form shall remain active. If a parent or guardian has not signed the Annual Field Trip Consent Form, the teacher or sponsor shall provide that student with a Field Trip Consent Form which must be completed and approved by the student’s parent or guardian before the student may participate in the field trip.

Upon approval of any other field trip occurring outside of Missoula, the teacher or sponsor must provide each student with a Field Trip Consent Form which must be completed and approved by the student’s parent or guardian before the student can participate. The form should describe the field trip and provide general information about the trip.

Extracurricular coaches are not required to fill out a Field Trip Approval Form prior to each out of district event, and students participating in extracurricular activities with recurring trips must provide only one Field Trip Consent Form per season.

In addition, each volunteer chaperone will be provided with the District's Guidelines for Volunteer Field Trip Chaperones.

A person with a currently valid American Red Cross Standard First Aid Card or equivalent first aid training certification must be present for all field trips, athletic and other off-campus events.

OPI and national safety organizations strongly recommend that, in the interest of providing the safest means of transportation available. Students should be transported to school-related activities in school buses, which meet state and federal school bus standards. Passenger vehicles and vans do not offer the same safety levels as school buses; and therefore, present a substantially higher risk to passengers; which in turn presents greater levels of liability to the District and to the driver of the vehicle.

MCPS does not allow students to be transported to school-related activities in District owned or leased vans that do not meet school bus safety standards.

Personal vehicles should only be allowed to transport students to school-related activities when it is both practical and reasonable and only after the completion of the [Volunteer/Employee Driver Vehicle Use Form](#) and approval is given by the school principal. Proof of insurance must accompany the form. Additionally, the Field Trip Permission Form must be signed by the parent or guardian indicating the use of the car is authorized. In this case, responsibility and liability rests first and primarily with the driver.