STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

School Field Trip SOP

Document no.	SOP-EDU-004
Revision	1.0
Owner	Assistant Principal
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To make sure every field trip is approved in advance, students are accounted for at every stage, and staff and chaperones know how to respond if something goes wrong.

2. Scope

Applies to all off-campus trips for students during the school day or after hours, including day trips and overnight trips. Daily bus transportation to and from school is covered by a separate procedure.

Definitions

Chaperone ratio	The minimum number of adults required per group of students, set by school policy or grade level.
Permission slip	The signed form from a guardian authorizing a student to attend the trip and providing emergency contact and medical information.
Headcount	A physical count of students against the trip roster, done at each departure, stop and return point.

3. Responsibilities

Teacher	Plans the trip, briefs students and chaperones, and leads headcounts throughout the trip.
Assistant Principal	Approves the trip proposal, confirms chaperone ratios, and is the point of contact for emergencies during the trip.
Front Office Administrator	Collects permission slips and emergency contact forms and arranges transportation.
Parent Chaperone	Supervises an assigned group of students and reports any concern to the lead teacher.

RACI matrix

Activity	Teacher	Assistant Principal	Front Office Administrator	Parent Chaperone
Submit and approve the trip proposal	R	A	C	-
Collect permission slips and medical forms	C	I	R/A	-
Arrange transportation and	C	A	R	-

Activity	Teacher	Assistant Principal	Front Office Administrator	Parent Chaperone
chaperone ratios				
Take headcounts throughout the trip	R/A	I	-	R
Respond to an incident during the trip	R	A	I	C

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Trip proposal and approval form
- Signed permission slips and medical forms
- Class roster with emergency contacts
- First aid kit and any student medications
- Chaperone assignment list
- Mobile phone or two-way radio for each group leader

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Submit the trip proposal** Submit a trip proposal with the destination, date, educational purpose, transportation plan and estimated cost to the assistant principal for approval.	Teacher	☐
5.2	**Approve the trip and chaperone ratio** Review the proposal, confirm it meets the school's chaperone ratio and safety requirements, and approve or return it with changes. **Checkpoint:** The trip is not confirmed with families until the chaperone ratio and transportation plan are approved.	Assistant Principal	☐
5.3	**Arrange transportation** Book transportation with an approved provider and confirm pickup and return times, seating capacity and driver contact information.	Front Office Administrator	☐
5.4	**Distribute and collect permission slips** Send the permission slip and medical information form home with students, and track returned forms against the class roster. **Checkpoint:** No student attends without a signed permission slip and emergency contact information on file.	Front Office Administrator	☐
5.5	**Assign chaperone groups** Assign each chaperone a fixed group of students for the day and give them a copy of the group roster with emergency contacts.	Teacher	☐
5.6	**Prepare the emergency kit** Pack a first aid kit, any student medications with instructions, the class roster and a charged phone or radio for each group leader.	Teacher	☐
5.7	**Brief students and chaperones** Before departure, review behavior expectations, the day's schedule, meeting points and what to do if a student becomes separated from the group.	Teacher	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.8	**Take a headcount before departure** Count every student against the roster before boarding transportation and again before the vehicle leaves the school. **Checkpoint:** Headcount matches the approved roster before the vehicle departs.	Teacher	☐
5.9	**Take headcounts at each stop** Each chaperone counts their assigned group before leaving any location and reports the count to the lead teacher.	Parent Chaperone	☐
5.10	**Respond to an incident during the trip** If a student is injured, ill or missing, call emergency services if needed, notify the assistant principal immediately, and keep the rest of the group together with a chaperone. **Warning:** Never send a single adult alone to search for a missing student; keep the remaining group supervised and call for help.	Teacher	☐
5.11	**Take a final headcount before returning** Count every student against the roster before boarding transportation back to school, matching the departure count.	Teacher	☐
5.12	**Confirm arrival back at school** Take a final headcount when the group returns to school and confirm every student is picked up or dismissed per normal procedure.	Teacher	☐
5.13	**File the trip report** Submit a short report noting attendance, any incidents and lessons for the next trip to the assistant principal within a few days.	Teacher	☐

6. Quality checks

- Every student on the trip has a signed permission slip on file before departure.
- Chaperone ratio matches or exceeds the school's minimum requirement.
- Headcount is recorded and matches the roster at every stop, departure and return.
- An emergency kit and working communication device travels with each chaperone group.

7. Records

- Signed permission slips and medical forms
- Trip proposal and approval
- Headcount log for each stop
- Trip report and incident notes

8. KPIs

- Percentage of students with a permission slip on file before departure
- Number of trips meeting the required chaperone ratio
- Time to complete a headcount at each stop
- Number of incidents reported per trip

9. Common mistakes

- Departing before every permission slip is confirmed and filed.
- Skipping a headcount at a stop because the group seems small enough to track by sight.
- Not giving chaperones a written roster or emergency contact list for their group.

- Failing to brief chaperones on what to do if a student is separated from the group.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Alexa Uskova

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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