

## FIELD TRIPS AND OTHER STUDENT TRAVEL

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The Bangor School Committee recognizes the educational value of school-sponsored trips as a means of extending the curriculum and as a vehicle for encouraging and supporting student participation in academic, artistic, and athletic activities, performances and competitions. In addition, some school-sponsored trips may provide social experiences and contribute to the development of a positive school culture.

This policy provides guidance for the various kinds of trips that may be sponsored by the Bangor School Department.

### **Field Trips**

“Field trip” means a trip that takes place during the school day and is organized and conducted by one or more Bangor School Department employees as a means of accomplishing particular curriculum objectives. All students within the class or grade, or curriculum related subgroup within a class, will be eligible to participate.

Field trips must be approved in advance by the building principal.

Teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in planning and approval of field trips:

- A. Objectives of the proposed trip and the anticipated learning outcomes;
- B. Specific learning activities to be experienced during the trip;
- C. Suitability of the activity and distance traveled to the age of students;
- D. Mode and availability of transportation, with school bus transportation arranged so as not to disrupt school bus schedules;
- E. Arrangements for meals (if applicable);
- F. Availability of funding for all necessary expenses through the school budget or other appropriate sources.

In addition, the Committee requires that:

- A. Parents/guardians give written permission for field trip participation;
- B. Adequate supervision be provided to maintain discipline and safety and to respond to emergencies; and
- C. Students participating in field trips conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Committee policies and school rules.

### **Competition Trips**

“Competition trip” means any trip related to an academic, artistic, athletic, or other student competition or performance that involves individual students or teams. Any competition trip that is outside of those scheduled for the year must be approved in advance by the Superintendent. Approval may be contingent upon availability of funding through the school budget or other sources.



**Other School-Sponsored Trips**

Other school-sponsored trips are those that are organized and conducted by one or more employees of Bangor School Department as a supplement to the curriculum or as an activity planned by a student club or organization. As a general rule, such trips may not include overnight, out-of-state travel, or foreign travel if there are in-state, more reasonable options available. To be school-sponsored, the trip must relate directly to the curriculum or to activities for which the student group is organized.

Participation in such trips is entirely voluntary. There shall be no extra credit awarded for participation and no loss of credit for not taking a trip.

Participation may be limited to students taking courses related to the purpose of the trip or to students who are affiliated with the student club or organization planning the trip.

The Superintendent must approve, in advance, any trips involving out-of state travel and all overnight trips. Approval may be contingent upon availability of funding from the school budget and other sources, including student fundraising.

Staff or administrators seeking approval for school-sponsored trips must furnish the following information:

- A. Objectives of the trip and anticipated outcomes;
- B. Specific experiences to be provided;
- C. Number and grade(s) of students;
- D. Criteria for student participation;
- E. Maximum number of students who may participate;
- F. Cost per student, including funds requested from Bangor School Department and from individual students;
- G. Fundraising plans (if applicable);
- H. Transportation arrangements;
- I. Itinerary;
- J. Arrangements for meals and lodging;
- K. Arrangements for adult supervision/chaperons, with a minimum ratio of 20:1
- L. Plans for safety and emergencies;
- M. Plans for communicating information to parents and obtaining parental permission; and
- N. Accountability for student conduct.

Adequate supervision must be provided to maintain discipline and safety and to respond to emergencies.

Students participating in field trips and other school-sponsored trips must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Committee policies and school rules. Students who violate Committee policy or school rules will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

**Water-Related Field Trips**

Water-related field trips are divided into four categories: (1) field trips that involve swimming at lakes, beaches, or pools; (2) field trips that take place near the water but at which swimming is not allowed; (3) field trips that involve boats or other watercraft; and (4) field trips to water parks. Any water-related field



trip must be approved in advance by the Superintendent. Approval may be contingent upon availability of certified lifeguards who are trained in water competency, funding, and appropriate ratio of chaperones.

1. Recreational Swimming at Lakes, Beaches, Pools, or Any Body of Water
  - a. Field trip participants are required to demonstrate water competency before being allowed to swim by a certified lifeguard who has current certification in water competency.
    - i. All adult and student participants will be designated as swimmers, beginners, or non-swimmer.
      1. Participants not wanting to take the swimming competency assessment will be designated as non-swimmers.
      2. If a swimming competency assessment is not able to be done, all participants will be designated as non-swimmers.
      3. Non-swimmers are required to be in water no deeper than waist deep and must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved Type II or Type III life jacket when in the water.
    - ii. Each participant will be assigned to specific swimming areas, equipment, facilities, and activities based on demonstrated abilities in the swimming-competency assessment.
  - b. Adequate lifeguard coverage will be ensured.
    - i. One lifeguard for every 25 swimmers
  - c. Participants in the water will be monitored by designated “lookouts” or “watchers.”
    - i. One adult chaperone for every ten swimmers
    - ii. Lookouts or watchers observe students in the water and help to alert lifeguards if there are any issues.
    - iii. Ideally, lookouts or watchers should receive training in Basic Water Rescue.
  - d. Students will be paired with a buddy.
    - i. Each participant is paired with another and buddies are required to stay together.
    - ii. Buddies remain within an arm’s reach of each other while in the water or around the water.
    - iii. Chaperones will give an audible signal, such as a single whistle blast, and call for buddies to raise each other’s hand within the minute to demonstrate both swimmers are safe.
  - e. The swimming area will be inspected and a safety talk will be provided to all participants, covering the specific risks and hazards presented by the swimming facility.
    - i. All participants will be informed of the specific risks and hazards present at the facility.
    - ii. Safety talk will be presented by a lifeguard who is familiar with the facility
  - f. Employee chaperones should participate in basic water-safety training.
  - g. Proof of liability insurance will be provided by the swimming facility.
    - i. A minimum coverage of \$1 million per occurrence.
2. Non-Swimming Activities Near Water
  - a. All participants are prohibited from entering the water in any way if there is no lifeguard coverage.
  - b. Participants may enter the water up to a depth no greater than to the bottom of their knees if there is lifeguard coverage.
    - i. One life guard per every 50 participants.
  - c. Participants will be monitored by designated “lookouts” or “watchers.”
    - i. One adult chaperone for every ten participants.
    - ii. Lookouts or watchers observe students and help to alert lifeguards if there are any issues.
  - d. Students are required to participate in a buddy system (explained in 1.d.).
  - e. The water area will be inspected and a safety talk will be provided to all participants, covering the specific risks and hazards presented by the activity.
    - i. All participants will be informed of the specific risks and hazards present at the facility/location.
    - ii. Safety talk will be presented by a lifeguard who is familiar with the facility.

### 3. Boating Activities



Boating activities can only be conducted through reputable and insured third party vendors. No personally owned watercraft are allowed on field trips.

- a. Participatory Boating Activities
  - i. All participants are required to wear a PFD, as well as know how to use a PFD, the safety regulations to be followed, how to enter and exit a boat, and how to react if a boat capsized.
  - ii. Vendors must have appropriately certified and trained instructors or guides.
  - iii. Vendors must provide safety procedures to all participants, including the requirement of wearing a safety vest.
  - iv. Vendor must have appropriate equipment that has passed all safety checks and has been regularly maintained.
  - v. Vendor carries Liability Insurances at a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence
  - vi. Students are required to participate in a buddy system (explained in 1.d.).
- b. Boat transportation
  - i. All passenger vessels carrying more than six passengers must have U.S. Coast Guard Licensure
  - ii. The transportation provider must have professional, licensed crew with training and experience handling emergency situations.
  - iii. The transportation provider must provide a safety orientation to all passengers that covers the location and proper use of lifejackets and other critical information. The provider will require all participants to comply with its rules regarding PFD use.
  - iv. The transportation provider will provide current liability insurance with a minimum of \$1 million in coverage per occurrence.
  - v. Students are required to participate in a buddy system (explained in 1.d.) or other appropriate safety-check system that is monitored by designated chaperones at designated times and locations.

#### 4. Water Park Field Trips

- a. The school will obtain and review information about safety practices, staff training, and water park staffing before authorizing field trips.
- b. The water park will maintain a current liability insurance with a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence.
- c. The school will require participants either provide certification of water competency or wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket.
- d. A safety talk will be given to all participants that covers the specific risks and hazards presented by the water park.
- e. Students are required to participate in a buddy system (explained in 1.d.) or other appropriate safety-check system that is monitored by designated chaperones at designated times and locations.

#### 5. Swimming Lessons and Therapeutic Swims

- a. The school will obtain and review information about safety practices, staff training, and pool staffing before authorizing swimming lessons or therapeutic swims.
- b. The pool will maintain a current liability insurance with a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence
- c. Adequate lifeguard coverage will be ensured.
  - i. One lifeguard for every 25 swimmers
- d. Participants are required to demonstrate water competency before being allowed to swim by a certified lifeguard who has current certification in water competency.
  - i. All adult and student participants will be designated as swimmers, beginners, or non-swimmer.
  - ii. All non-swimmers will remain in the shallow end and work on developing swim skills under the direct supervision of a swim instructor.



- iii. Swimmers may swim in the deep end after they pass the deep-end test and must be supervised by a swim instructor.

**Non-School-Sponsored Travel**

Travel organized by Bangor School Department employees, parents or others that is not an extension of the instructional program or school-sponsored activities and has not been approved as a school-sponsored trip in compliance with this policy will be considered a non-school-sponsored trip.

All responsibility for non-school-sponsored trips lies with the individual(s) or group(s) organizing them. The Committee accepts no responsibility for non-school-sponsored trips, and organizers should be aware that such trips or excursions are not covered by the school unit's liability insurance.

To minimize the impact of these trips on the instructional program and operation of the schools, the Committee strongly encourages organizers/sponsors to schedule non-school-sponsored trips during weekends and/or vacation periods. Staff members planning or participating in non-school-sponsored travel must notify the building principal of such plans. Student absences due to participation in non-school sponsored travel will be considered unexcused absences.

Instructional time may not be used to promote the trip or distribute materials. Individuals or groups who wish to use the schools for the purpose of publicizing trips or recruiting participants and parents/chaperones may do so in accordance with the Committee's facilities use policy. Individuals or groups wishing to distribute promotional materials may do so only in accordance with Committee policy. Non-school-sponsored trips must not be represented as school functions or as related to, or an extension of, the District's school unit's instructional, co-curricular or extracurricular programs.

It is the responsibility of any staff engaging in such trips or activities to notify the parents of prospective and participating students that this is not a school activity, but an independent voluntary trip organized or lead by that teacher or staff member. To minimize any risk of misunderstanding, the following statement must be made in any informational meetings or materials promoting the trip:

"This trip is not approved or sponsored by the Bangor School Committee or Bangor School Department. It has not been reviewed, approved or endorsed by authorized Bangor School Department administrators and it is not covered by any of Bangor School Department's insurance policies."

Reference: Report from Daniel Stockford, Esq. of Brann and Isaacson. (July 27, 2018).  
"Investigation Report: Part 2, Relating to Drowning of Lewiston Middle School Student at Range Pond State Park on June 12, 2018."

ADOPTED: July 29, 2015

REVISED: September 26, 2018

