



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

STUDENT FIELD TRIPS INVOLVING FOREIGN TRAVEL

AP No. 6153.1

Effective Date: August 20, 2025

- I. **PURPOSE:** To provide information to school system personnel for implementing student foreign travel field trips.
- II. **POLICY:** The Prince George's County Board of Education (Board) recognizes field trips as an integral part of the instructional program. Field trips provide educational experiences, beyond the school environment, which support, enhance and extend classroom instruction and curriculum at all levels. In addition, field trip experiences offer extended opportunities for students to practice self-regulation, consideration for other people, and provide an opportunity for students to apply information learned in an academic setting. (Board Policy 6153)
- III. **BACKGROUND:** There is a need to have uniform procedures for schools when arranging student foreign field trips in order to safeguard the educational value of these experiences. The goal is to plan and follow specific procedures so that Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) can provide for each student's safety and welfare during the trip. This administrative procedure applies to all class and student organization foreign field trips. This administrative procedure does not circumvent the requirements under Administrative Procedure 6153 related to field trips.
- IV. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. *Chaperone* – A PGCPS staff member or responsible and approved adult volunteer who agrees to participate with the sponsoring teachers/supervisors for the foreign field trip and abide by the terms of the procedures.
 - B. *Field trip* – Any activity or excursion with students away from the school building, under sponsorship of the school, and under the guidance and supervision of PGCPS staff members and chaperones.
 - C. *Foreign travel trip* – Any field trip outside the United States requiring a passport and lodging for students and chaperones.

- D. *Sponsoring teacher/supervisor* – A member of the school or central office staff who is directly responsible for the planning of a field trip. Only two sponsoring teachers/supervisors may be assigned for a field trip. For purposes of this administrative procedure, long-term substitutes and temporary staff may not be designated as the sponsoring teachers/supervisors, but may participate as foreign travel trip chaperones, as provided further below.
- E. *Travel/Destination Management Company* – A business travel agency that manages an organization's travel requirements. The agency must be a pre-approved PGCPs vendor.
- F. *Un-sponsored trip* – Any unauthorized trip organized by school system employees acting as private citizens outside of their PGCPs employment.
 - 1. It must be made clear by the coordinating employee to participants, including students and their parents/guardians, that the trip is not a school or PGCPs-sponsored activity and that any students and/or their parents/guardians who attend do so at their own risk. Participants are not provided with either liability coverage or indemnification by PGCPs and, in these cases, staff members are not covered by workers' compensation.
 - 2. Staff may not use any school or district resources, including email and classrooms, for the purposes of advertising.
 - 3. It must be made clear through all promotional materials and meetings that the foreign travel trip is not school/PGCPs-sponsored and that staff members are not participating as a part of their official duties.

V. **PROCEDURES:** In order to safeguard that a foreign travel trip is related to educational goals and provides the necessary safety and security for all participants, the following procedures shall be followed:

- A. **Chaperone Requirement:** For foreign travel trips, one (1) chaperone is required for every five (5) students. At least one-half of the chaperones participating in a foreign travel trip must be PGCPs staff. If a waiver is needed for this requirement, the principal must submit an alternative plan to the Chief Academic Officer for review and approval.
- B. **Chaperone Eligibility:** To serve as a chaperone, the following requirements, as outlined in Administrative Procedure 4216.6 – Volunteer Services, must be met:
 - 1. Prospective chaperones must complete the volunteer registration and approval process, which includes a PGCPs fingerprint background check and child protective services at least 15 business days before the foreign travel trip. In

addition, they must complete the required volunteer training at least seven (7) business days in advance of the foreign travel trip.

2. Using the PGCPs SMS Register Manager database in Oracle, designated school staff, administrators, and/or teachers must verify the completion of chaperone eligibility requirements. With the implementation of this electronic process, schools no longer have to maintain receipts or documentation of completion for an approved chaperone.
 3. Any parent/guardian who needs assistance covering the cost of a fingerprint background check, and whose child(ren) qualify for free and reduced priced meals, may request a waiver of the background check fee by providing a copy of their eligibility letter from the PGCPs Department of Food and Nutrition Services to the Fingerprint Office.
 4. The prospective chaperone must review and adhere to provisions of Administrative Procedure 4218 – Dating and Sexual Relationships Among Students and Employees, Independent Contractors, and Volunteers; and Administrative Procedure 4219 – Inappropriate Relationships Among Students and Employees, Independent Contractors, and Volunteers.
 5. Chaperones are expected to complete all volunteer requirements.
- C. As student and staff safety is paramount, foreign travel will not occur to areas that are subject to travel warnings or advisories issued by the United States Department of State. Destinations with Level 3 or above travel advisory are unacceptable foreign travel destinations. The sponsoring teacher/supervisor shall frequently consult the State Department’s online advisories for assurance. In cases where a previous Level 1 or 2 travel advisory is upgraded to Level 3 before the travel time, the approved foreign travel will be canceled. The sponsoring teacher/supervisor must investigate the financial protections (reimbursements, concessions, etc.) offered by the travel company if there is a cancellation due to a rise in the travel advisory level for the travel destination and include a cancellation statement in the field trip documentation with the protections, if any.
- D. If for any reason scheduled travel needs to be cancelled, the sponsoring teacher/supervisor shall inform the principal who will communicate through the chain of leadership to the Superintendent. Only the Superintendent has the authority to cancel foreign travel. Parents will be alerted that a trip might be canceled, due to travel advisories or other circumstances, and that the final decision of the Superintendent will be communicated to them as soon as possible.
- E. Submission Requirement of Foreign Travel Packet: A completed foreign travel trip request packet with all required documents must be submitted by the

sponsoring teacher no less than 90 calendar days prior to the date of departure, following the steps below:

1. Step 1: Obtain approval for the foreign travel by completing the Foreign Travel Trip Request form (Attachment 2) with all required signatures by the last school day in September of the school year in which the trip will occur.
2. Step 2: Upon foreign travel approval, plan all aspects of the foreign travel trip using only an approved Travel Management Company, who will handle all of the arrangements. Checks in payment for the trip will be made payable to the travel agency. Obtain a Travel Management Company contract - As a reminder, principals are not authorized to sign contracts. The travel approval is required prior to submitting contracts for review and signature to the Department of Purchasing and Supply Services. Contracts should be submitted to purchasi@pgcps.org. All high-risk events/activities planned during the trip must receive approval from Risk Management during Step 1. (See Attachment 8).
3. Step 3: Host a mandatory orientation with an agenda (see Section V.H.1.b) for interested students/families and have all participants complete the sign-in sheet;
4. Step 4: Provide interested families a student permission slip (See Attachment 3 sample);
5. Step 5: Collect participating student contact information (Attachment 4) - Preliminary student contact information shall be submitted with the foreign travel packet. If changes occur, schools shall submit a revised attachment to the Area Office before the scheduled trip. Make colored copies of the passports for all students/chaperones on the foreign travel trip.
6. Step 6: Solicit chaperones and complete the chaperone information form (Attachment 5). If changes occur, the designated school staff member shall submit the revised chaperone information before the scheduled foreign travel trip. Designated school staff, administrators and/or teachers are responsible for verifying the completion of the chaperone requirements using the PGCPSSMS Register Manager.
7. Step 7: Develop a Trip itinerary and Lesson Plan. Ensure all high-risk activities have been approved by Risk Management.
8. Step 8: Schedule transportation and hotel/lodging accommodations with room assignments - Chaperones supervising the overnight lodgings must be of the same gender or gender identity as those being housed in the same room.

9. Step 9: Attach the Field Trip Checklist (Attachment 1) to the packet and ensure all components/attachments are included. This form should serve as the cover sheet for the packet. The completed packet with all required documents and attachments should be submitted 90 calendar days prior to the date of departure.
 10. Note: Per Administrative Procedure 0103 – Transgender and Gender Diverse “students shall be granted access to housing facilities, restrooms and any other gender specific activity consistent with their gender identity.”
 11. Note: Every PGCPs employee attending an overnight foreign travel trip must complete a Nonlocal Travel Request form ([Administrative Procedure 4134 Attachment 1 – Non Local Travel Request Form](#)). The Non-local Travel Request form must be signed by the employee as the “Traveler Requestor” and approved by the principal/supervisor.
 12. Note: The sponsoring teachers should research and be aware of the location of the American embassy and the customs of the country.
- F. Once collected, the following documents shall be retained at the school for five (5) years:
1. Notification to School Nurse of Field Trip Checklist (Attachment 6) – Each sponsoring teacher/supervisor shall provide a copy of Attachment 6 to the school nurse indicating the date, time, place and length of the trip at least thirty (30) calendar days in advance, or as soon as approval is received if less than 30 days. If a school does not have an assigned nurse, the school principal/designee should contact the Office of School Health and request to speak with the nurse manager for their school.
 2. If applicable, Parent Waiver for the Exclusion of Water-Related Activities (Attachment 7) – A parent waiver is required for each student attending a PGCPs-approved foreign travel trip to an amusement park, beach, or other locations where water activities are available. Students may not participate in or utilize splash parks, wave pools, or other contained bodies of water while on a foreign travel trip to an amusement park or other specified location. This form shall be issued to parents for completion when applicable.
 3. Parent Fact Sheet for Medication at School (PMOF)
 4. Prescriber’s Medication Order Form
- G. Foreign travel trips shall be considered approved when the Foreign Travel Trip Request form (Attachment 2) is completed with the following approvals:

1. Principal;
2. Chief Academic Officer;
3. Risk Management;
4. Instructional Director;
5. Area Associate Superintendent;
6. Chief of School Support and Leadership; and
7. Superintendent

H. Pre-Travel Requirements

1. Mandatory Pre-Travel Orientation
 - a. After approval of the foreign travel trip, pre-travel orientation session(s) shall be scheduled by the sponsoring teacher/supervisor to inform students, parents/guardians, and chaperones of necessary details;
 - b. At least one of the orientation sessions shall be mandatory for students who plan to participate, parents/guardians of students who plan to participate, and the chaperones. At the mandatory orientation session, the following information shall be disseminated:
 - 1) Sponsoring teacher/supervisor reviews expectations for responsible student/chaperone behavior, *i.e.*, bus, train, and airplane behavior, group and individual courtesy, following directions and the Student's Rights and Responsibilities Handbook (including the Code of Student Conduct);
 - 2) Sponsoring teacher/supervisor will inform students, chaperones and parents of the Travel Management Company's trip cancellation policy, availability of travel insurance, and the refund schedule. The sponsoring teacher/supervisor requests that the Travel Management Company send a representative to the mandatory orientation session to address these topics;
 - 3) Sponsoring teacher/supervisor will inform students, chaperones and parents of expenses that are not included in the cost of the trip, such as required inoculations, passport/visa expenses, and personal expenses;

- 4) Sponsoring teacher/supervisor provides each chaperone with a copy of this administrative procedure, review expectations for supervising students, emergency procedures, and the itinerary and activities planned on the trip. All chaperones must agree to remain on-site at the conclusion of the trip until all students have been picked up;
- 5) Sponsoring teacher/supervisor reviews emergency procedures with students, chaperones and parents; *e.g.*, an accident involving student(s), separation from the group, etc.; and
- 6) Sponsoring teacher/supervisor informs students and chaperones that they must have their own portable electronic devices.

2. Pre-Departure Duties

- a. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor communicates with the cafeteria food service manager for adjustments that may be required with meals ordered for the duration of the foreign travel trip.
- b. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor shares foreign travel trip information with colleagues and staff responsible for recording student attendance to ensure that students are accurately coded in the student information system. Students participating in PGCPs-sponsored foreign travel trips should not be marked absent.
- c. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor furnishes the principal with a final list of scheduled student participants. At that time, the trip shall be deemed to be “closed” to any other students. If a participating student provides a cancellation notice within the seven (7) business days prior to the trip, another student on the standby list may be provided an opportunity to participate on the trip if the requisite paperwork and payments (if any) have been submitted.
- d. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor confirms receipt of all space allocations in writing prior to the scheduled departure date of the trip.
- e. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor develops an alternative plan for notifying concerned parties (transportation, students, and chaperones) to deal with delayed openings and trip cancellations.
- f. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor maintains possession of the emergency information roster and provides a copy to the principal. Information must include the name, address, home/cell, and work phone numbers of parents/guardian for each student involved in the trip. The sponsoring teacher/supervisor maintains, in their possession throughout the duration

of the trip, copies of permission slips including emergency medical treatment authorization and room occupancy plan, if applicable.

- g. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor provides a complete list of participating chaperones and their contact information to the designated school staff, administrators and/or teachers in charge of the foreign travel trip.
- h. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor conducts final consultation with the school nurse no less than seven (7) business days prior to the trip to review medication administration instructions and safe storage of medication(s) on the foreign travel trip.
- i. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor collects medications from the school nurse (return at the end of the trip) and keeps binder on hand during the foreign travel trip with copies of student medical forms. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor completes documentation immediately following the administration of medication(s) or upon return of trip.
- j. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor maintains a list of the home/cell telephone numbers of all of the PGCPs designated school staff, administrators and/or teachers who are based at the school that are organizing the trip.
- k. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor ensures that all movies being shown on foreign travel trips, including those from streaming providers, public library, or privately owned by a teacher or chaperone, are age-appropriate and in compliance with AP 6160 – Copyright Guidelines. All movies to be shown on all foreign travel trips must be approved by the appropriate department within the Division of Academics and schools must occupy a public site license to display movies.

I. Financial Arrangements: Trip Costs and Collection of Funds

- 1. No employee may derive any personal benefit or perk from contracted vendors. Any complimentary tickets or services shall be reported to the principal or central office supervisor for equitable distribution.
- 2. No funds may be collected until the foreign travel trip has been fully approved.
- 3. Under no circumstances may a sponsoring teacher/supervisor accept a deposit of funds from more participants on a trip than the sponsoring teacher/supervisor has space allocations for on the carrier chosen to transport the participants on the trip.
- 4. The price of any trip shall be reasonable and restricted to the actual costs of the foreign travel trip.

5. All funds collected for the trip must be deposited with the school's financial secretary on a daily basis and in accordance with Administrative Procedures 3420 and 5135.1. However, if a Travel Management Company is being utilized for the foreign travel trip, all payments shall be made payable to that Travel Management Company.
6. Any student having previously paid to participate on the foreign travel trip and unable to proceed on the same foreign travel, irrespective of cause, shall not be entitled to a refund of monies previously paid unless: (1) a student on "standby" is prepared to pay and go in their place; (2) the sponsoring teacher/supervisor determines that the issuance of a refund will not cause an increased expense to the remaining student participants; (3) the designated Travel Management Company's cancellation policy allows for refunds to be processed within the time frame under their discretion; and (4) the circumstance and urgency of the situation requires for the student to be physically present at home.
7. Only the Director of Purchasing and Supply Services may authorize and sign a contract with any Travel Management Company, tour operator, airline, railroad, or other transportation carrier, hotel, motel, or other place of lodging; Requests for contract review/approval should be emailed to Purchasi@pgcps.org. This process should take place no later than 60 calendar days in advance of the departure date.
8. If any foreign travel trip (including transportation costs) is to be funded by Board funds, in whole or in part, the trip shall be properly identified in the annual budget of the Board.
 - a. The principal shall be notified by the sponsoring teacher/supervisor as early in the fiscal year as reasonable of the amount of budgeted funds available for such purposes. The expectation is that the sponsoring teacher/supervisor will receive this information from the principal's secretary at the school organizing the trip.
 - b. The original notification to students and parents of the foreign travel trip is to include notice of the fact that the trip is funded, in whole or in part, through budgeted funds of the Board.
9. If any foreign travel trip is to be funded by local school originating funds, in whole or in part, information to that effect must be included in the original notice to students and parents.
10. Solicitation for the collection of funds by individual students, chaperones or community supporters of the foreign travel trip for the purpose of subsidizing the cost of the trip may only be conducted under the following circumstances:

- a. The trip is for students to participate in a recognized competition, tournament or performance convened by an international, national or regional sponsor or tournament committee;
 - b. The sponsoring teacher/supervisor identifies the fundraising goal and the manner in which the solicitations are to take place; and
 - c. Solicitations may not be through the means of raffles, lotteries or other similar games or opportunities of chance where prizes may be awarded as a result of the donation.
11. In the event that the school does not have sufficient funds available to cover the costs of the trip, the sponsoring teacher/supervisor shall advise the Principal that solicitation of funds may be needed to help subsidize the student trip costs.

J. Prohibited and High-Risk Activities

- 1. **Prohibited Activities:** Due to the nature of the activity or potential liability for PGCPs, high risk activities are not allowed for foreign travel trips. Please consult Attachment 8 for the list of prohibited activities. This attachment will be reviewed and updated annually.
- 2. Foreign travel trip requests to amusement parks may be submitted with the strict stipulation that students will not engage or utilize water parks, splash parks, wave pools, or related contained bodies of water while at the parks. Additionally, pursuant to Board Policy 6153, foreign travel trips to amusement parks are only permitted where the amusement park has demonstrated that it offers an educational program that relates to the PGCPs instructional program.
 - a. Schools are responsible for developing a plan that addresses specific actions that will be taken to limit access of these areas by students.
 - b. A signed parent waiver (Attachment 7 – Parent Waiver Excluding Water-Related Activities) is required for each attending student.
- 3. The Risk Management Office is available to provide additional guidance to staff who have questions about the activities listed in sections H.1. and H.2. or who have questions about an activity not listed in this administrative procedure.
- 4. Sponsoring teachers/supervisors and principals shall send to the Department of Purchasing and Supply Services all contracts, even if the contract is with an approved vendor. School system employees may not obligate PGCPs without prior review and approval by the Director of Purchasing and Supply Services. Failure to adhere to this requirement inappropriately increases the school system's

or the employee's liability for any damages or injuries that might occur on the trip.

K. Communication Between Staff, Chaperones and Students

1. PGCPS recognizes that staff may need to communicate with students and chaperones during foreign travel trips via phone and/or text messaging. In the event of an emergency during the foreign travel trip, staff may use personal, non-PGCPS accounts or devices - such as cell phones, tablets and computers – as a tool to text, email or otherwise communicate with students. Sponsoring teacher/supervisor should remind students, chaperones and parents to contact their cell carriers and make sure they activate their international travel capabilities.
2. PGCPS employees can also use Class Dojo, Remind or any other PGCPS-approved group application to communicate with students and parents via phone, text or email.
3. For additional guidance, please refer to Administrative Procedure 4126 – Employee Use of Social Media, and Administrative Procedure 4219 – Inappropriate Interactions Among Students and Employees, Independent Contractors and Volunteers.

L. Student Searches on Foreign Travel Trips

1. In accordance with § 7-308 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, student searches on foreign travel trips may **only** be conducted by a sponsoring teacher/supervisor if there is reasonable belief the student has possession of an item which is a criminal offense or is in violation of another state law or Board policy or administrative procedure and a third person is present during a student search.
2. In order to conduct a student search under this section, the principal must provide the sponsoring teacher/supervisor with training on how to conduct student searches and designate in writing the teacher(s) who are authorized to conduct student searches on the foreign travel trip.
3. Following a student search, the sponsoring teacher/supervisor shall contact the principal/designee and request that the principal/designee notify the student's parents to inform them of the search conducted and any follow up required.

VI. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE:

- A. Principals are the instructional leaders at their designated school, and they start the approval process. Therefore, they are responsible for monitoring and maintaining a report of the number and purpose of foreign travel trips taken by staff, the travel

- agencies used to plan the trip, and for ensuring adherence to this administrative procedure. This report should be made available to the Board if requested.
- B. In the school's main office, in a folder with the school year and foreign travel trip location, each school must:
1. Have verification, such as a screenshot and/or a printed copy of their certificate of completion, that all chaperones have completed required training and background clearances prior to the field trip by accessing the PGCPs SMS Register Manager database in Oracle;
 2. Have verification that at least one teacher on the foreign travel trip has been trained by the principal to conduct student searches; and
 3. Maintain all permission slips for student participation on trips for a period of five (5) years from the date of the trip, unless directed to retain copies for a longer period by the Office of Risk Management or the Office of General Counsel.
- C. Area Instructional Directors/ will provide notification to principals regarding the approval/denial of foreign travel trip requests and review allegations regarding non-compliance with this administrative procedure.
- D. All approvers will review foreign travel trip requests for compliance with this administrative procedure.

VII. RELATED PROCEDURES AND POLICIES:

Board Policy 0106 – Volunteer Services
Board Policy 4400 – Inappropriate Relationships between Students and Employees, Volunteers and Contractors
Board Policy 5135 – School-Based Fund Raising
Board Policy 6153 – Field Trips
[Administrative Procedure 4126](#) – Employee Use of Social Media and Personal Electronic Devices
Administrative Procedure 4134 – Non-Local Travel
Administrative Procedure 4134, Attachment 1 – Non-Local Travel Request Form
Administrative Procedure 4134, Attachment 2 – Travel Services and Contact Information
Administrative Procedure 4216.6 – Volunteer Services
Administrative Procedure 4218 – Dating and Sexual Relationships Among Students and Employees, Independent Contractors, and Volunteers
[Administrative Procedure 4219](#) – Inappropriate Interactions Among Students and Employees, Independent Contractors, and Volunteers
Administrative Procedure 5135.1 – Fundraising

[Administrative Procedure 5145](#) – Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect
Administrative Procedure 0103 – Transgender and Gender Diverse
Administrative Procedure 6153 – Student Field Trips: Day, Overnight or Virtual
Administrative Procedure 6160 – Copyright Guidelines
[Administrative Procedure 10101](#) – Student’s Rights and Responsibilities Handbook

VIII. LEGAL REFERENCE:

MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. § 7-308

IX. MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

This administrative procedure originates with the Division of Academics, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, and will be updated as needed by the World Languages Office.

X. CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDURES: This administrative procedure cancels and supersedes Administrative Procedure 6153.1, dated July 1, 2013.

XI. EFFECTIVE DATE: August 20, 2025.

Attachments:

1. Foreign Travel Checklist
2. Foreign Travel Request
3. Sample Permission slip
4. Chaperone Listing
5. Participating Student Contact Information
6. Notification to School Nurse of Field Trip
7. Parent Waiver for Trips to Amusement Parks
8. High-Risk Activities Sponsored by PGCPs
9. Parent Fact Sheet for Medication at School

Resources:

Medication Administration Record (MAR)
Parent Fact Sheet for Medication at School
Prescriber’s Medication Order Form
[PGCPs Curriculum Documents](#) (Lesson Plans)