



# Forest Ranch Charter School

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## Board Policy – Field Trips

### 1. Purpose

- a. The Forest Ranch Charter School Board of Directors (Board) recognizes that field trips sponsored by the Forest Ranch Charter School (Charter School) are an important component of a student's development. Besides supplementing and enriching learning experiences, such trips encourage new interests among students, make them more aware of community resources, and help them relate their school experiences to the outside world. Field trips shall be supported fiscally and encouraged as a regular part of the teaching curriculum by the Board and the Charter School.

### 2. Authority

- a. The Charter School may authorize field trips or excursions in connection with courses of instruction or school-related social, educational, cultural, athletic, or school arts and music activities to and from places in the state, any other state, or the District of Columbia for pupils enrolled in the charter school.
- b. No student of the Charter School shall be prevented from making a field trip or excursion because of lack of sufficient family funds or a physical disability.
- c. Charter School funds shall not be used for student travel outside of the State of California.
- d. The Charter School shall not authorize field trips which occur after graduation, and there shall be no planning for post-graduation field trips during the academic year on the school site.

### 3. Responsibilities

- a. Board of Directors - All trips involving out-of-county travel shall require the prior approval of the Board. Trips within Butte County may be approved by the Executive Director and ratified by the Board.
- b. Field Trip Coordinator – Each field trip shall have one individual in charge of the trip, usually the classroom teacher. The Field Trip Coordinator shall be responsible for the following requirements:
  - i. Preparing a written field trip request including a complete description of the trip, preferred date and alternate date for the trip, educational objective of the trip, costs and funding for the trip, transportation and chaperone plans, and a safety plan.

1. In-county trip requests should be submitted at least 10 days in advance for Director approval and Board ratification.
  2. Out-of-county trip requests should be submitted at least 30 days in advance, allowing time for listing on a Board Agenda and being approved at a Board Meeting.
- ii. Developing chaperone groups and a communication protocol/phone tree, in the event of emergency, that shall be attached to all field trip requests;
  - iii. Obtaining written approval from the Executive Director and the Board, as required;
  - iv. Assembling all completed field trip permission forms and filing them with the Charter School office;
  - v. All field trips must be supervised by at least one certificated staff person. Ratio of adults to students shall be adequate to the activities undertaken, age of the students, and specific requirements of the trip. Recommended ratios of adults to students are 5 to 1 for overnight trips and 10 to 1 for day trips.
- c. Executive Director – As the person responsible for all educational activities, it is the ultimate responsibility of the Executive Director to ensure that field trips are safely and responsibly directed, considering the following requirements:
- i. Ensure all forms have been filled out properly by the field trip coordinator and permission forms have been collected from the parent/legal guardian of every participating student prior to departure. Each permission slip must indicate with particularity the exact destination(s), the mode(s) of transportation, and departure and arrival times for the field trip.
  - ii. Proper transportation is provided, including school bus scheduling. If volunteer drivers (including parent/guardians) are used, Driver Safety Program protocol is followed, including copies of insurance declarations on file indicating appropriate insurance policy limits as well as compliance with safety and licensing requirements.
  - iii. Chaperones are recruited, if needed, who meet chaperone requirements including, but not limited to, TB testing, Megan’s Law DataBase and LiveScan fingerprinting.
  - iv. Certificates of insurance are obtained from or issued to any organizations involved in the field trip, if applicable.
  - v. Establish and communicate the expectations for student behavior and staff responsibility for adult chaperones for all trips outside campus, including required equipment and procedures.
  - vi. Field trip approval requests are sent to the Board in a timely fashion meeting required deadlines. In addition, any changes to the previously submitted field trip information must be reported.

- d. Travel Organizations - Effective January 1, 1996 S.B. 142, the "Student Traveler Protection Bill" requires full disclosure of each travel organization's experience, insurance protection, and financial stability. The certificated staff sponsor must obtain a completed Seller of Educational Travel Compliance Form (see forms for required information) if the trip involves a travel organization.
  - i. The Charter School Board will require the submittal of the above completed form prior to any advance payment for student travel costs.

#### **4. Participants**

- a. Approved participants for the trip shall include only students who are currently enrolled (on the date of the trip), pre-school siblings of a participating student, parents/guardians, other approved adult chaperones, Charter School employees and members of an employee's family.
- b. Field trip attendance is a privilege that may be revoked by the classroom teacher or the Executive Director based on in-class behavior or whose presence on the trip would pose a safety or disciplinary risk.

#### **5. Funding**

- a. No student shall be prevented from making a trip because of lack of sufficient funds. No trip shall be authorized if any student would be excluded from participation because of lack of sufficient funds.
- b. Fundraising activities may be necessary to make a trip possible for all students. All parent funding requests shall be termed "donations." Field trip expense funds shall be received, deposited, accounted for, and distributed by the Field Trip Coordinator and the Business Manager.

#### **6. Parental Notification and Permission**

- a. Parents should be notified at least two (2) weeks in advance of day field trips unless there are special circumstances approved by the Executive Director. Special circumstances should be relayed to all families either in person or over the phone if at all possible.
- b. Parents should be notified at least four (4) weeks in advance of overnight field trips. The purpose of this notice is to inform parents of any special items, i.e., down sleeping bags, etc. they may need to borrow or purchase in order to outfit their child appropriately and to notify parents of estimated costs to allow time to budget for their financial donation.
- c. Parent permission must be given in writing prior to pupil being allowed to participate in any special student trip. Seasonal parent permission slips may be filed by parent/legal guardian for ongoing trips related to extracurricular school activities.

#### **7. Records**

- a. The Charter School office shall maintain field trip records for each trip. Files shall include trip approval forms, itineraries, permission slips, chaperone

agreements, teacher agreements, drivers' information, and may include criminal background (fingerprint) clearance records for adult volunteers.

## **8. Safety and First Aid**

- a. The Director shall ensure that Field Trip Coordinators develop plans which provide for the safety of students and their proper supervision by certificated staff on all school-sponsored trips. Other Charter School employees and parents/guardians also may participate in this supervision and may be asked to attend preparatory training session and/or meetings.
- b. While conducting a trip, the teacher, employee or agent of the Charter School shall have the Charter School's first aid kit in his/her possession or immediately available.
- c. The Charter School does not guarantee the availability of school-provided safety seats. Families are expected to make every effort to provide a safety seat for their students on field trip days. While conducting a trip, the teacher, employee or agent of the Charter School shall ensure that students requiring a child safety seat are provided with one, either from home or by the Charter School. Students requiring but lacking a safety seat shall not be transported.
- d. Before trips of more than one day, the Director or designee shall hold a meeting for staff, parents/guardians and students to discuss safety and the importance of safety-related rules for the trip. For non-certificated adults who will assist in supervising students on the trip, the Director or designee may also hold a meeting to explain how to keep appropriate groups together and what to do if an emergency occurs.

## **9. Volunteer Drivers**

- a. If agreement has been reached with the supervising teacher, volunteers who comply with Charter School requirements, which may include a Driver Safety Program and Defensive Driver Training, may transport students on field trips.
- b. When installed and used correctly, child safety seats and safety belts can prevent injuries and save lives. The Charter School Volunteer Driver Safety Program shall include training on the proper use and age/size requirements for use of federally-approved child vehicle restraint systems.
- c. Adult volunteer drivers may do so provided the driver:
  - i. is currently licensed;
  - ii. does not have excessive accident, seat-belt or moving violations;
  - iii. does not have any recent DUI conviction(s);
  - iv. is the owner or legal renter of the vehicle;

- v. is fully insured according to Charter School guidelines.
- d. Volunteer driver vehicles must be in proper working order and meet all applicable safety standards. These safety standards shall be communicated to volunteer drivers as part of the Driver Safety Program. Volunteer drivers shall attest to the compliance of their vehicle with these standards.
- e. Volunteer drivers may not drive students in vehicles that are designed to carry more than seven passengers plus the driver, for a maximum total of eight persons in a vehicle.
- f. The Charter School does not carry insurance on private vehicles.
- g. All adult volunteer drivers must provide the Charter School with a current automobile insurance declaration with at least the following limits:

**AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY INSURANCE**

COVERAGE	LIMITS		DEDUCTIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bodily Injury</li> <li>• Property Damage</li> </ul>	\$100,000.00 \$300,000.00 \$100,000.00	each person each occurrence each occurrence	Not Applicable
Uninsured Motorists Insurance for Bodily Injury	\$100,000.00 \$300,000.00	each person each accident	Not Applicable
Automobile Medical Payments	\$5,000.00	each person	Not Applicable

**10. Chaperones**

- a. If agreement has been reached with the supervising teacher, volunteers may chaperone students on field trips if they have complied with all Charter School requirements pertaining to the chaperoning of students. Certificated staff must remain reasonably proximate to volunteer chaperones at all times.
- b. Chaperones must:
  - i. comply with school volunteer requirements including but not limited to LiveScan fingerprinting (at least 10 days in advance of overnight or out-of-county trips), Megan’s Law Database and TB Tests;
  - ii. agree to and sign the Chaperone Agreement/ Code of Conduct;
  - iii. be familiar with Charter School policy before attending the field trip;
  - iv. be responsible adults above the age of majority and approved by the field trip coordinator;

- v. ensure that no adults or students partake of any alcohol or illegal substances;
- vi. ensure there will be no smoking on the part of chaperones or students;
- vii. must understand that they share responsibility for the actions of their charges. Any damage inflicted on property or persons will be the responsibility of the students and the chaperones of the students that committed the offense. Any agreement to make restitution will be the responsibility of the chaperones;
- viii. are responsible for ensuring that students on overnight trips are in their hotel room at a set curfew time, not roaming the hotel creating noise and infringing on the rights of other hotel patrons;
- ix. sleep in the same hotel-room as the students.

### **11. Overnight and Out-of-State Field Trips**

In addition to the Responsibilities listed above, the following requirements apply to Overnight and Out of State Field Trips:

- A. For all overnight field trips, the field trip coordinator must prepare a Request for Overnight Field Trip Form (see forms).
- B. All overnight field trips must be accompanied by at least one certificated staff person, including athletic field trips. For Co-ed trips, there must be Charter School staff with background clearance for each gender in attendance. Ratio of adults to students shall be adequate to the activities undertaken, age of the students, and specific requirements of the trip. Recommended ratios of adults to students are 5 to 1 for overnight trips.
- C. If students will be divided into smaller chaperoned groups on the trip, a certificated staff person must remain reasonably proximate to each group throughout the trip.
- D. A resolution requesting Board approval for out-of-state and out-of-county student trips must contain the following information: (see field trip request form)
  - i. Site name
  - ii. Educational purpose of trip
  - iii. Number of student participants
  - iv. Length of trip
  - v. Destination
  - vi. Names of certificated employees accompanying students
  - vii. Source of funding
  - viii. Description of student selection process

- ix. An affirmation that parental permission forms are on file for all students participating
  
- E. The Request for Overnight Field Trip Form must be signed by the trip sponsor, his/her site administrator and approved by the Board.

**12. Adoption**

- a. This board policy was initially adopted by the Forest Ranch Charter School governing board on April 14, 2011.
- b. This board policy was reviewed and approved by the Forest Ranch Charter School governing board on February 9, 2012.
- c. The next annual review will occur on or before February 9, 2013.