



6.7 FIELD TRIPS POLICY

I. PURPOSE

Engaging in the community is an important component of the Oak Hill Montessori Community School (OHMCS) model. Off-campus trips and experiences support this engagement. The purpose of this policy is to define the process and procedures for student field trips and travel.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

OHMCS supports student field trips and travel that are properly planned, well-organized, and carefully supervised, and will accommodate students participating in off-campus activities. All field trips and travel require parent or guardian authorization, except for students who are of legal age. This policy is in effect whether or not school is in session.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. An “extended trip” is a trip that includes one or more overnight stay. An extended trip may be an instructional, supplementary, or activities-related trip.
- B. An “instructional field trip” is a trip that takes place during the school day and is required as a part of a basic education program or course.
- C. A “supplementary trip” is a voluntary trip and is optional, but enhances a basic education program or course. These trips may take place during or outside the regular school day.
- D. A “tentative trip proposal” is a draft of a proposed extended trip.
- E. A “final trip itinerary” is a final draft of an extended trip proposal that is to be submitted for review and approval.



- F. An “organizer” is the OHMCS employee responsible for the field trip or travel. The organizer may be an administrator, teacher, coach, or advisor.

IV. TYPES OF TRIPS AND TRAVEL

A. Instructional Field Trips

1. An instructional field trip is a trip that takes place during the school day and is required as a part of a basic education program or course. Because instructional field trips are required for a basic education program or course, OHMCS pays the costs associated with instructional field trips (including transportation) and may not charge the parent or student. OHMCS may receive support from external organizations to cover part or all of the costs of these trips.
2. A parent or guardian of a student may request that reasonable alternative instruction be provided to a student in lieu of the instructional field trip.
3. The procedures for planning and seeking approval for instructional field trips will be determined by the OHMCS Executive Director.

B. Supplementary Trips

1. A supplementary trip is a voluntary trip and is not part of required coursework. As such, OHMCS may require the parent or student to pay some or all of the costs associated with a supplementary field trip, including transportation. Supplementary trips may also be financed by contributions from external organizations. Families can apply for educational benefits support to cover the costs associated with a supplementary trip.



2. The procedures for planning and seeking approval for supplementary trips will be determined by the OHMCS Executive Director.

C. Extended Trips

1. Extended trips may be instructional or supplementary and are optional. These trips involve overnight stays.
2. Overnight arrangements must focus on a safe and secure setting for all participants.
3. Except for air travel, no student transportation shall occur during night time hours, defined as midnight to 5:00 a.m.
4. The procedures for planning and seeking approval for extended trips will be determined by the OHMCS Executive Director.
5. The Executive Director will notify the OHMCS Board of Directors of all extended trips before they occur.

D. Extracurricular Activities Trips and Travel

1. OHMCS may provide transportation for participants to sponsored extracurricular activities.
2. If transportation is provided, participants will be expected to ride OHMCS provided transportation to and from events. With approval by the organizer, a student may ride with a parent or guardian to or from an event. A student may only ride with a person other than a parent or guardian if the parent or guardian provides a signed, written release authorizing the ride and the organizer approves.



3. If extracurricular activities include an overnight stay, the requirements for extended trips must be followed.

V. EXTENDED TRIPS- SPECIAL PROVISIONS

- A. The procedures for planning and seeking approval for extended trips will be determined by the OHMCS Executive Director.
- B. The tentative trip proposal is to be approved or disapproved by the Executive Director taking into consideration factors including, but not limited to:
 1. Ability level of the group, as determined by the advisors;
 2. The ability of the group to serve as a role model for OHMCS;
 3. The level of parent or external support, including financial support, and
 4. The impact on school attendance by participants, with a general guideline of two school days of approved absence and no conflicts with major exam schedules.

VI. CHAPERONES AND SUPERVISION

The organizer has the primary responsibility for the trip. The organizer has responsibility for student discipline. The number and gender of adult chaperones must be appropriate to the level, gender, and needs of the students. The ratio of at least one chaperone for every twelve students is recommended. At least two chaperones are required for all trips involving an overnight stay. Chaperones are considered school volunteers and are responsible for the supervision of students. Chaperones are selected by, and are under the supervision of, the organizer. If an administrator chaperones an extended trip, OHMCS may pay some or all of the administrator's trip expenses.

VII. STUDENT CONDUCT



All students who participate in trips will be required to comply with all school rules while on the trip. Any student who violates school rules while on the trip may be sent home from the trip, with a chaperone if necessary.

VIII. PARENT AUTHORIZATION

All field trips and travel require parent or guardian authorization. A general authorization form for instructional field trips will be included as part of the student enrollment packet. Parents will not be asked to sign authorization forms specific to each instructional field trip, though they will be notified in advance of all upcoming off-campus trips and have the option to request alternate, on-campus instruction. Parents will be asked to sign specific authorization forms for supplementary trips outside the regular school day and all extended trips.

IX. HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES

The organizer must endeavor to act in the best interest of the students' health, safety and welfare during a field trip or travel.

X. TRIPS NOT SPONSORED BY OHMCS

Employees entering into contracts or agreements with commercial agencies without formal OHMCS approval do so at their own risk and expense. Any trip not approved by OHMCS is considered a private venture and the school shall not be liable for costs or expenses of any type associated with the trip. Employees engaging in a private venture, cooperating with, receiving benefit from, or serving as agents for a commercial agency, shall not use school work time, materials, or other school resources to promote, plan, organize or recruit students for the non-school sponsored trip. The employee must provide interested and/or participating students and their parents/guardians with a disclaimer that states that the trip is a non OHMCS sponsored event and not endorsed by OHMCS.

