



## Provo City School District

### Policy Series 4000: Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

4006 P2

### Student Travel: Overnight Trips

Overnight student travel is subject to the foundational criteria of possessing a clear educational purpose per Policy 4006. Student Travel will not be approved if it is seen to be deficient in educationally defensible experiences. Extended excursions should not be requested if comparable experiences are available closer to home. Students are not to remain overnight if it is practical to return home. Frequent trips to the same location every year may require additional justification by the trip sponsor to verify the educational purpose.

This procedure delineates all aspects related to student overnight travel for both in-state and out-of-state events. Principals, teachers, coaches, and other district staff intending to conduct Overnight Trips are required to follow all aspects of this procedure.

#### *Trip Types*

Two general categories of Overnight Trips may occur under the authority of Provo City School District:

- “In-State overnight trips are approved at the superintendent’s level and are to be submitted not later than three (3) weeks prior to the proposed event. Further criteria for approval of this type of overnight trip are found in this procedure in its entirety, and also on form 4006 F1. The superintendent is also authorized by the Board to approve out of state travel requests for:
  - Courses/activities/programs where students have qualified for regional/national competitions following local and state competitions. This includes individual entrants as well.
  - Activity/Athletic groups traveling to the same locations for the same events each year.
  - Due to close proximity to Utah, student travel proposals to greater Las Vegas, which hosts a large variety of significant interscholastic events, will be interpreted as “in-state” and can also be approved by the superintendent. Interpreting Las Vegas in this manner does not change the fact that it is a different state and is governed by a different set of health and safety regulations. Therefore, additional documentation may be needed from the trip sponsor (teacher/coach) and by the hosting organization prior to receiving approval from the superintendent to ensure Provo City School District and Utah Risk Management guidelines are met.
- Out-of-state overnight trips are approved by the PCSD Board of Education in Board business meetings in September, November, and February. All applications must be submitted for Board review not later than one week (7 calendar days) prior to the respective board meeting. The superintendent will review the request form and if all requirements are satisfied, he/she will forward to the Board for consideration. No more than 2 school days may be missed except in situations noted later in this procedure. All related criteria as outlined in this procedure are also required to be

met. Out of state trips may be in the continental United States only.

- The superintendent is authorized by the board to approve out of state travel requests that might arise between February and September, with travel also to occur during that time. The superintendent at his/her discretion, reserves the right to receive documentation verifying that this opportunity has arisen during this time frame. If the superintendent has concerns, he/she should discuss with board leadership the prospect of bringing the request to the full board in an upcoming board meeting for board approval.

For all proposed overnight travel, the approved overnight travel request form must be used (Form 4006 F1) with additional documents attached as required and appropriate. Trip sponsors and a school administrator are required to attend the board meeting study session where the trip request is being considered, prepared to answer questions from the board. It is a violation of Policy 4006 and related procedures to conduct any form of student travel without having advance approval and without following all applicable aspects of these procedures.

### **I. The sequence, process, and timelines for submitting a student travel request for approval.**

When an activity sponsor is interested in submitting a student travel request, he/she must first contact the building principal to talk through possible plans or concerns. From that point, the following guidelines provide the next steps and sequence of events that would lead to approval.

#### *Parent Permission*

Parents/guardians must provide written consent for all travel. Each overnight trip requires a separate consent form that is specific to the particular trip. Overnight trip consent forms must include the nature of all of the activities in which the student(s) will participate. As well, they must include permission signature line(s), emergency contact telephone numbers, and permission to provide emergency medical care. All such documentation must be in hand not later than 24 hours prior to departure. The employee who sponsors the trip is required to take a copy of all such documents with him/her on the trip. A file with this same documentation must be left at the school.

#### *Application Form and Information*

The application form represents not only the important information about the trip so the Board can make an appropriate decision but is also a commitment by the trip sponsor(s) that the information shared about costs, itinerary, etc. will occur as outlined. Significant changes to the trip that violate what was approved by the Board (and by extension, this policy and procedure) will result in a more difficult process for gaining approval for future trip requests and could result in cancellation of the trip.

The information provided by the trip sponsor(s) on the request form should be coherent and must clearly explain the educational value of the trip. Other details such as chaperones, fundraising, costs, etc. must also be clearly explained. If additional space is needed, the trip sponsor should attach additional sheet(s).

A detailed draft itinerary is to be submitted with the travel request form on a separate sheet. For out

of state trips that will cost each student more than \$50, a detailed cost-per-student sheet is required.

#### *Principal Review and Endorsement*

While all overnight travel requests receive final approval by the Superintendent and/or Board of Education, all travel must first be approved and recommended by the principal after safety, supervision, and educational justification have been verified.

When the principal is forwarding applications on to the superintendent and the Board for approval, all criteria on the form must be clearly and defensibly addressed, and all appropriate signatures are to be in place. A written itinerary detailing planned daily activities must accompany the travel request form. The principal is responsible for checking to ensure that any trip request to go before the superintendent and the Board meets all of the essential criteria for overnight trip approvals.

#### *Superintendent Approvals*

All applications for overnight travel are to be submitted directly to the superintendent. *For overnight trip requests in-state* and other superintendent-level approvals (noted on the first page of this procedure) all timelines and other criteria as noted must be followed.

*The superintendent also reviews all out-of-state travel requests* prior to forwarding them to the Board for consideration. Incomplete applications and/or applications with insufficient details may not be moved forward to the Board for approval. Trip sponsors need to be thorough in completing the forms and justifying the educational purpose(s) of the trip.

#### *Board Approval Timelines*

All travel requests need to be approved by the Board not less than three (3) months in advance of the scheduled trip. In advance of the Board meeting, the travel request must arrive on the superintendent's desk not later than 7 days in advance.

Trip sponsors are provided with three (3) times each school year to seek approval from the Board. Again, overnight out-of-state trips are approved by the PCSD Board of Education in Board business meetings in September, November, and February. These approval dates are firm. Only in an extreme exceptional circumstance will the Board consider any approvals off of this cycle. The main benefits of this timeline are twofold:

1. Costs and trip events should be much more accurate and definite than events planned 6+ months in advance.
2. The ability to be more responsive to opportunities/changes that can arise throughout the year.

Example:

1. Student Group X wishes to go on a trip in early March of the same school year.
2. The Travel request must be approved by the Board in the November Board meeting.
3. The completed forms must have been submitted, complete with signatures, details, and a most accurate itinerary to the superintendent not less than seven (7) days prior to the November Board meeting.

For out-of-state overnight trip requests (noted on the first page of this procedure) all timelines and other criteria of this procedure must be followed and sufficient information provided.

The Board, upon receiving a recommendation from the superintendent (who has reviewed all such trip requests prior to presenting them to the Board) may render any of the following decisions.

- Approval
- Denial
- Conditional approval with specifics on what information is yet required
- Denial with an invitation to re-submit once any noted deficiencies are corrected/clarified
- The decision that the Board does not wish to accept a trip proposal as part of district auspices. In such cases, this trip could only occur as a non-approved travel event, and must be held separate from using school/district titles, fundraising, etc.

#### *Changes after Board Approval*

Though a final number of students participating in an upcoming trip may not be exact, travel requests needing approval from the Superintendent or Board of Education must be submitted well in advance of the proposed excursion.

The trip requests for which approval is sought are considered to be binding, in that no material variation of the approved plans will be permitted. “Material variation” is defined as no increase in cost per student, no levying of additional fees, no additional days of school missed, number of days of the trip, dates of the trip, etc. It also includes destinations/activities not included in the submitted itinerary. Any such changes that are essential to trip success must be brought, in a written request, to the superintendent as soon as is reasonably possible. The superintendent will approve or deny the requested change, as may be warranted.

Upon receiving the approval from the Board, the trip sponsor may begin to proceed with making firm travel arrangements consistent with the request form presented to the Board.

#### *Elementary and Middle School Trips*

Overnight travel for elementary and middle school students can be approved only by the Board of Education. Exceptions may be granted at the middle school level in the following cases:

- Middle school travel that requires no loss of school instructional time may be approved by the Board, such as during summer months.
- Middle school travel that is a next level of an academic program within the school (such as an individual student or group that wins a competition).

Fifth Grade Camp (Camp Big Springs) would be a notable exception to the overnight restriction for elementary-aged students.

## **II. Justifications for Travel**

The study of curriculum at the school site provides the basis for student learning in Provo City School District. However, meaningful activities and field trips can enhance student learning and are supported by the Board and district administration. To be considered for approval, an activity or field trip must meet the following criteria:

- Has a high degree of educational value and serves a definite educational purpose that cannot be experienced in Provo
- Does not disrupt the basic educational program
- Originates from a current unit of study and is appropriate for the age and maturity level of the group
- Provides understanding to students of the purpose of the trip and the expected learning outcomes

- Assures student safety and meets requirements for appropriate liability insurance
- The learning experience shall not be exclusive: students regardless of financial ability to afford the trip will have the same opportunity as students for whom the trip is more affordable

Extra-curricular trips include travel by such groups as academic teams, athletic teams, performance teams, and other school-recognized groups to recognized UHSAA meets, workshops, or other forms of state and national competition that enhance the participants' skills and performance. These trips must also meet the criteria detailed above.

Student groups who travel regularly to the same location (especially destinations that include a significant amount of recreation activities and/or amusement parks) will be scrutinized even more closely. In question is the need to justify what the educational purpose is of returning to the same location frequently.

### **III. Trip Organization and Planning**

Extended excursion planning should be started as far as possible in advance of the trip to permit adequate time for students/families to handle the necessary funds. Travel costs must be included in the schools annually Board approved student fee schedule. Travel costs on the fee sheet must include all meals, admissions, etc. When possible, representative students and parents should be involved in all phases of trip planning. A parent information meeting is required for overnight travel. The school must provide evidence of substantial support by members of the group and their parents prior to principal approval.

Trip sponsors are required to develop complete itineraries, including daily 24-hour plans and activity listings. Also included in the documentation will be room assignments, code of conduct expectations, curfew requirements, and buddy groups. Assuming students will be bringing cell phones on the trip, a complete list of student and chaperone cell phone numbers will be compiled and available for chaperone use.

As noted elsewhere in this procedure, all travel arrangements are required to be made through the approved, contracted Utah state travel agencies.

Following are the known benefits of dealing with the approved state travel agency for student travel:

- Long-term experience with planning travel for school programs
- Preferred relationships with hotels and vendors for preferred pricing and additional concessions
- Vetted vendors to mitigate risk (includes bus inspections, licensing, insurance, "rate on the road reports," etc.)
- Transparent billing with minimal 5% profit (approved by state contract)
- Regularly searching out additional qualified vendors for competitive pricing and quality service to school programs
- A neutral party to ensure appropriate vendors are selected
- A neutral party to simplify and manage programs to avoid school/teacher/parent issues
- Experienced staff to research and book group flights with 24-hour assistance
- Track and compare group travel spending

- A local resource (not simply an online, impersonal booking service)
- Back-up resources available for busy times to ensure smooth operations during peak times
- Ability to have consistent processes by school and district by utilizing one planning team
- Preferred vendors for optional trip insurance

Contracts needing to be signed to reserve travel arrangements, approve performance/competition participation, etc. must be routed to the school's main point of contact for supervising travel in the building. This designated individual, who works with both the principal and the district business office, will know who should sign such legal documents. In the case of any legal contract, only a small number of district administrators can sign such a document on behalf of the district.

#### **IV. Fee Waivers and Fundraising**

All PCSD-approved trips are required by state law to be eligible to all students regardless of a student's ability to pay for the trip. Trip sponsors cannot deny students' participation in the trip due to an inability of a student(s) to meet the cost. For this reason, all trips should be designed to incur as little cost to students as possible. Per state law, fee waiver students may be required to participate in fundraising activities in order to benefit from fundraising proceeds. When planning the trip, fees must be set assuming all students will pay. Students who do not qualify for fee waivers must not be charged extra to cover costs associated with students who do qualify for fee waivers.

All approved fundraising, including individual and group fundraising, will be in accordance with district fundraising policy and procedure, and must be included in the board approved student fees schedule.

Fundraising conducted to provide funds for student travel must be approved by the principal. Individual students may not be assessed amounts to fundraise. However, general fundraisers may be held. Money that is raised through school fundraising may not be refunded directly to a student if the student is unable to participate in the trip.

#### **V. Refunds**

Trips requiring extensive travel may require payment well in advance of the scheduled trip to secure transportation and lodging among other expenses. Students may be required to provide advance payment to help cover these costs. In the event of an unforeseen circumstance, such as family illness or death, that prevents a student from participating in the trip, the student may receive a full refund of any money paid. Students may not receive a refund for any money that was raised through school fundraising. Fundraised money will remain within the school program. School administration may request verification (e.g. doctor's note) of the cause for any refund request.

If a student is not able to attend, no refund will be provided for non-refundable expenses, such as airfare.

#### **VI. Limitations: Number of overnight trips per organization & number of school days missed**

No high school group may participate in more than two overnight trips during any school year, nor miss more than two school days on any one trip. This applies to school groups, not to individual

students who are participants in approved overnight travel with multiple school groups. Overnight trips for elementary and middle school students are discouraged but may be allowed with the permission of the Board of Education.

The two (2) school day limit is waived for overnight trips emanating from qualification in national academic competitions, including DECA, FBLA, FCCLA, FFA, VICA, HOSA, TSA, Central Utah Science and Engineering Fair, regional/national academic competitions if the competition exceeds two (2) school days. *The Superintendent must approve such travel requests.*

## **VII. Risk Management Approval and Insurance**

Part of the approval process includes the requirement that all PCSD-sponsored trips are subject to review by the Utah State Risk Management agency. If Risk Management recommends that a proposed travel event (or portion thereof) does not meet appropriate standards, the trip will not be approved, or that portion of the trip must be adjusted.

Following trip approval, Utah State Risk Management services will provide Provo City School District with liability insurance. However, as part of the approval process the Board or Superintendent may require additional risk insurance to protect the financial status of the district and to help families receive compensation should an accident occur. A detailed itinerary must be submitted for Utah State Risk Management approval. Once approved, the itinerary should not be changed.

All trip activities including water locations (beaches, etc.) are subject to Risk Management approval. See also the accompanying list of approved Risk Management activities.

## **VIII. Chaperoning and Supervision of Students**

Whenever students travel, there shall be adequate and mature supervision to provide for the safety of the students.

Students should never be left behind and/or unsupervised while under the responsibility of the district.

Trip sponsors will provide (and principals will ensure) enough supervision to assure the safety of students. While this supervision will vary across activities, the minimum supervision allowed will be one (1) chaperone to ten (10) students.

If both male and female students will be attending the overnight trip, both male and female chaperones are required.

Care should be exercised in selecting adult supervisors. All trip chaperones are, by definition, volunteers and therefore must pass a fingerprint/background check. They should be persons of good report, a minimum of 21 years of age, preferably older. Chaperones should be the parents or teachers of the participating students. Other supervisors (if used) must be prior-approved by the principal. Older siblings of student participants in the trip are discouraged. Supervisors may not share private sleeping rooms, such as motel rooms, with students other than their own

children.

### **IX. Emergencies, Accidents, and Student Discipline**

In case of an emergency occurring during the trip, the chaperone is authorized to make those adjustments necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the students and will immediately report the emergency to the principal of the school. All circumstances related to any accident will be documented and reported in writing to the district business administrator (Risk Management officer).

Academic and behavior standards shall be established prior to trip approval by the principal and published by the teacher on the approval form. Participants in any travel experience should be students in good academic and behavioral standing and approved for travel as per the published standards for the trip and outlined in Policy 4006. Students who travel under the name of the school and adults who supervise that travel become role models for others and help establish and maintain the reputation of the school and district. Behavior and conduct of students and chaperones fall under the rules and policies for the school, district and State Code (Reference: Utah Code 53A-11-908), in addition to the specific standards adopted for the event. Members of the travel group who violate the behavior expectations outlined will be sent home from the travel experience and will travel home at their own expense.

### **X. Costs and per-student charges, including chaperone expenses**

The cost of travel shall be kept as low as reasonably possible without compromising the safety of the students and chaperones involved. No student at any grade level shall be denied participation due to lack of funds if the excursion takes place during the school day. For more extended student travel, students will be encouraged to participate in approved fundraising projects. Minimum chaperones should be included in the cost of the trip per student. Any additional chaperones, outside of those required by this policy, must pay their own travel expenses.

Trip sponsors may be concerned about needing some funds while on the trip. If so, they must make arrangements to access funds in advance of the trip. All receipts and unused funds must be returned to the school finance secretary immediately after the conclusion of the trip. The Provo City School District finance office will provide assistance to the designated school travel contact person in dealing with use of p-card and/or cash advances, and financial reconciliations related to each trip. All such records are subject to audit.

The school will designate a travel contact person who will help coordinate overnight travel arrangements per the directions in Policy 4006 and this procedure. That individual will handle all trip arrangements and will coordinate with the Provo City School District purchasing office.

### **XI. Meals**

All meals should be included in the per-student cost of a trip and included on the district-approved fee sheet. Meals on a trip should be limited to \$8.00 for breakfast, \$8.00 for lunch, and \$14.00 for dinner (including staff and chaperones), unless approval is granted for additional funds (itemized on the trip itinerary) for special team dinners or destinations where allotted funds are not sufficient.

### **XII. Travel Safety**



The safety of participants is of primary concern when travel occurs. Schools are to provide clear safety instructions to students and chaperones prior to leaving for a travel experience and review safety instructions periodically during extended travel experiences. Travel will be documented and reported in writing to the district business administrator (Risk Management officer).

Academic and behavior standards shall be established prior to trip approval by the principal and published by the teacher on the approval form. Participants in any travel experience should be students in good academic and behavioral standing and approved for travel as per the published standards for the trip and outlined in Policy 4006. Students who travel under the name of the school and adults who supervise that travel become role models for others and help establish and maintain the reputation of the school and district. Behavior and conduct of students and chaperones fall under the rules and policies for the school, district and State Code (Reference: Utah Code 53A-11-908), in addition to the specific standards adopted for the event. Members of the travel group who violate the behavior expectations outlined will be sent home from the travel experience and will travel home at their own expense.

### **XIII. Transportation**

Under no circumstance is travel approved with student drivers. Students are not approved to drive other students to, from, or during school-sponsored events.

Secondary school travel requires the use of a district bus or licensed public carrier. However, the student may travel with his/her own parent. With approval from the principal (day trips) or superintendent (overnight trips), chaperones may transport small groups of secondary students in private, rental, or district-owned vehicles. Secondary school travel less than ten miles from the school may be provided by staff and parents who are willing to assume all legal liability associated with personal transportation and have completed the online Risk Management course.

All student travel arrangements must be made through the contracted Utah state travel agency and in accordance with state travel regulations or approved vendors authorized by the purchasing department. Arrangements must not be made through unauthorized 3<sup>rd</sup> party travel companies, such as those found online.

All drivers of private vehicles must sign the Provo City School District Authorization to Transport Students Form (Policy 6625 Form 1 & 2), provide evidence of a current driver's license and automobile insurance that meets the state minimum liability requirements, and complete State Risk Management online training. All drivers of rental vehicles must obtain insurance through the rental company.

No student of any age should travel anywhere alone with a staff member or parent, other than his or her own parent.

Extended travel should not be initiated after 10:00 pm and should end prior to midnight, unless it takes place on a commercial carrier.

### **XIV. Travel Conditions**

Travel shall not be approved if unsafe conditions exist. If unsafe conditions arise after travel has been approved, travel shall be cancelled or changed accordingly. Prior to departure on a trip, the principal, superintendent, and/or Board reserves the right to conduct a safety review of the trip and to cancel the trip if conditions warrant such action. Unsafe conditions include, but are not limited to, adverse weather conditions, outbreaks of serious, communicable diseases and actual or threatened violence or terrorism.

## **XV. Conclusion**

While the Board of Education recognizes educational value of relevant off-campus experiences, it should not be assumed that making application for travel approval means the travel will always be approved.

Applications for extended travel are more likely to gain travel approval if:

1. There is high educational value
2. The cost per student is not excessive
3. Minimal school time is missed
4. There are not equivalent opportunities that are closer and less expensive
5. Safety/risk concerns have been met and cleared
6. Adequate insurance is built into the plan
7. Sufficient student and parent support exists to make the trip a viable education experience and worth the expense
8. Advance planning is such that adequate time and methods exist to earn money for the trip
9. Fee-waiver students have the opportunity to participate in the trip and the school has adequate resources to cover the fee waivers
10. No pressure is placed on non-participating students who are members of the group
11. The group has been reasonable in its previous travel requests (location and cost) and has had success in previous travel (i.e., no problems)
12. Students will be able to meet established and required school, state, and/or national testing and academic activities

## **Non-School District Trip Guidelines**

### *Non-Commercial Sponsorship*

School employees are not to solicit students to participate in any commercial or non-school sponsored trip or excursion.

Travel requests and activities not approved by the Board are therefore not considered activities of Provo City School District and the district assumes no liability for such events. The use of the name/title of the district or its schools in fundraising for this type of activity, or in identifying supervisors who are district employees, is not permitted. All other activities or actions that imply district support of these events are also forbidden.

Non-School District trips such as “senior parties” or “graduation trips” that take place after high school graduations or trips sponsored by staff or parent groups outside of the regular school calendar are not approved, sponsored or otherwise endorsed by the district. These trips are private, and/or commercial ventures. The district does not pay wages or any other trip-related expenses for any staff member to supervise the trip and the District has no control over

organization of the trip. Such activities are not District “fieldtrips.”

Any staff member and/or parent group/organization conducting a non-District sponsored trip should state prominently on all correspondence and communications regarding the trip that:

1. The trip is not a School District field trip and that the Provo City School District accepts no liability for the trip. Neither the name *Provo City School District*, nor the name of the school shall be used in correspondence or communications regarding the trip.
2. The district is not responsible for any information, claims or representations promulgated to students and/or parents regarding the trip.
3. The name of the parent group/organization sponsoring the trip must be clearly noted on all correspondence and communications.
4. School uniforms are not permitted to be worn for non-district sponsored activities.
5. Staff participating in a non-sponsored trip shall be responsible for assuring the following:
  - a. All handling of student money/funds will be by the sponsoring organization and collected outside of the instructional day, including lunch periods.
  - b. There shall be no participation in a trip during regularly scheduled school/work days.
  - c. Review the liability coverage of the sponsoring organization and consult with personal insurance company for additional coverage. The district’s liability insurance does not cover any participants, including students, staff or parents on any non-sponsored event.
  - d. Contracts/agreements are not to be signed by anyone acting as a representative of Provo City School District.
  - e. District employees will receive no compensation or expense reimbursements from the district.
  - f. Use of school facilities for planning meetings shall be in compliance with District facility use procedures.
  - g. Use of District equipment and other resources is limited to musical instruments, sheet music, costumes and other ancillary performance items that may be checked out by teachers/students/parents.
  - h. Student participation must be voluntary and staff must avoid any actions that might otherwise appear to recommend or promote participation in the trip as related to the educational program.

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