

Adopted: December 17, 2014

Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

## **BLUESKY CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY No. 6.7 FIELD TRIPS AND TRAVEL**

### **I. PURPOSE**

Properly planned, well-conducted, and carefully supervised trips can be an important part of education. Trips with a sound educational basis and that are directly related to a school activity are supported by BlueSky Charter School. The purpose of this policy is to define the process and procedures for student field trips and travel.

### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

BlueSky Charter School supports student field trips and travel that are properly planned, well-organized, and carefully supervised. Students participating in approved field trips and travel will be permitted to prepare assignments in advance and make up work missed. 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. Examples of trips in this category include class trips, class activities, school-sponsored clubs, teams and other recognized and approved special interest groups.
- 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 BlueSky Charter School employee responsible for the field trip or travel. The organizer may be a head coach, teacher, administrator, or activities 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, [SCHOOL NAME] pays the costs associated with instructional field trips and may not charge the parent or student. (See Minn. Stat. §123B.36 -Authorized Fees, Minn. Stat. §123B.37 - Prohibited Fees). BlueSky Charter School may receive support from booster clubs or similar organizations to cover part or all of the costs of these trips.
2. A parent, guardian, or adult student may request that reasonable alternative instruction be provided to a student in lieu of the instructional field trip.
3. The application for an instructional field trip should be submitted, in writing, to the building principal at least two weeks prior to the date of the trip. If the instructional field trip includes an overnight stay, the requirements for extended trips must be followed. The building principal will complete the review and decision regarding the instructional field trip.
4. Students will be transported to instructional field trips on BlueSky Charter School provided transportation.

##### **B. Supplementary Trips**

1. A “supplementary trip” is a voluntary trip and is not part of required course work. As such, BlueSky Charter School may require the parent or student to pay some or all of the costs associated with a supplementary field trip. Supplementary trips may also be financed by contributions from booster clubs or similar organizations.
2. The application for the supplementary trip should be submitted in writing to the building principal at least four weeks prior to the date of the trip. If the supplementary field trip includes an overnight stay, the requirements for extended trips must be followed. The building principal will complete the review and decision regarding the supplementary field trip.
3. Students will provide their own transportation to supplementary field trips.

### C. Extended Trips

1. Extended trips may be instructional or supplementary and are optional. These trips involve overnight stays.
2. The proposal and approval process for extended trips are as set forth in Section V below.
3. Overnight arrangements must focus on a safe and secure setting for all participants.
4. Except for air travel, no student transportation shall occur during night time hours, defined as midnight to 5:00 a.m.

### D. Extracurricular Activities Trips and Travel

1. BlueSky Charter School will provide transportation for participants to all conference, nonconference and Minnesota State High School League sponsored events. Funding may also come from participants, parents, booster clubs, etc.
2. Transportation costs for a band or musical group appearing at an event not sponsored by BlueSky Charter School will not be provided by BlueSky Charter School. Funding may be provided by participants, parents, booster clubs, etc.
3. Participants will be expected to ride BlueSky Charter School provided transportation to and from away events, contests, and competitions. With approval by the organizer, a student may ride with a parent to or from an away event, contest, or competition. 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 building principal or organizer approves.
4. If the extracurricular travel includes an overnight stay, the requirements for extended trips must be followed.

## V. **EXTENDED TRIPS – SPECIAL PROVISIONS**

- A. Tentative Trip Proposal. A tentative trip proposal is required for all extended trips. The proposal should provide BlueSky Charter School Director or designee(s) with background information about the trip. The timeline for providing the tentative trip proposal to BlueSky Charter School Director is as follows:
1. for international trips - six months in advance of the departure date;
  2. for trips within the United States - four months in advance of departure date;

3. for local/regional trips - two months in advance of the departure date.
- B. The tentative trip proposal should include, at a minimum:
1. Name of the organizer;
  2. Purpose of the trip;
  3. Destination;
  4. Number of participants expected;
  5. Tentative trip schedule;
  6. Transportation arrangements;
  7. Plan for safety of the students while on tour including, at a minimum, the number of chaperones and their responsibilities;
  8. Method of financing, including estimated cost to each student; and
  9. Lodging and meal arrangements.
- C. Approval or Non-Approval of Tentative Trip Proposal. The tentative trip proposal is to be approved or disapproved by BlueSky Charter School Director taking into consideration factors including, but not limited to:
1. Ability level of the group, as determined by the advisors or coaches;
  2. The ability of the group to serve as a role model for BlueSky Charter School;
  3. The level of parent or booster club 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.
- D. Final Trip Itinerary. If the tentative trip proposal is approved, the organizer must submit for approval a final trip itinerary. While maintaining a degree of flexibility that allows slight modifications designed to enhance the quality of the trip or improve upon the organization of the trip, the final trip itinerary should provide BlueSky Charter School Director the pertinent details of the trip. The requirements for approval of the final trip itinerary are as follows:
1. for international trips – approval by the school board four months before departure date;

2. for trips within the United States – approval by the school board two months before departure date;
  3. for local/regional trips (defined to include the five state area Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Wisconsin) – approval by BlueSky Charter School Director one month before departure date.
- E. Unique Circumstances. Unexpected invitations to perform, compete, receive awards, etc., may arise from time to time. To provide flexibility to allow sports teams and activity groups to accept such special invitations, BlueSky Charter School Director is authorized to approve participation in such an event notwithstanding the team or group's inability to meet the notification and approval requirements of this policy.
- F. Costs. Groups that are planning to travel must develop a fundraising plan to acquire adequate funds for interested students to participate. The organizer must seek out a minimum of two competitive bids for travel and lodging expenses for international and national trips. Travel bid awards will be reviewed for cost, experience and accommodations. These considerations should be given careful consideration by the organizer and BlueSky Charter School Director prior to accepting a bid for travel and lodging.
- G. Frequency of Trips. Fine arts ensembles, athletic teams and student groups may travel on a local and regional basis annually. National trips should not be scheduled in consecutive years. A fine arts ensemble, athletic team or student group may take an international trip once every three years. BlueSky Charter School Director may waive these frequency standards at his/her discretion.

## **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 one chaperone for every 12 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 a building principal or administrative designee chaperones an extended trip, BlueSky Charter School may pay some or all of the principal or administrative designee's trip expenses.

## **VII. STUDENT CONDUCT**

The organizer is responsible to ensure that all appropriate parent/guardian permission forms have been received. All students who participate in trips will be required to comply with all school rules while on the field trip. Any student who violates school rules while on the trip may be sent home from the trip, with a chaperone if necessary, at parent/guardian expense.

#### **VIII. 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.

#### **IX. TRIPS NOT SPONSORED BY BLUESKY CHARTER SCHOOL**

Employees entering into contracts or agreements with commercial agencies without formal BlueSky Charter School approval do so at their own risk and expense. Any trip not approved by BlueSky Charter School is considered a private venture and BlueSky Charter 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 BlueSky Charter School sponsored event and not endorsed by BlueSky Charter School.

**Legal References:** Minn. Stat. §123B.36 (Authorized Fees)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.37 (Prohibited Fees)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.49 (Curricular and Extracurricular Activities; Insurance)  
*Sonkowsky v. Board of Educ. for Indep. Sch. Dist. No. 721*, 327 F.3d 675 (8th Cir. 2003)  
*Lee v. Pine Bluff Sch. Dist.*, 472 F.3d 1026 (8th Cir. 2007)

**Cross References:** Policy \_ (Discipline, Suspension and Dismissal of School District Employees)  
Policy \_ (Employee – Student Relationships)  
Policy \_ (Student Discipline)  
Policy \_ (Student Medication)  
Policy \_ (Student Fundraising)  
Policy \_ (Community Organizations, Parent Organizations and Booster Clubs)  
Policy \_ (Student Transportation)