

ESSEX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Field Trip Request Manual

Field Trip Request Procedure



The District Field Trip Request Form must be completed for all trips. This form requires the approval of your building Principal/Administrator prior to sending to Central Office.

DIRECTIONS

1. Complete the Field Trip Request Form.
 - [Click here for the form](#)
2. Send the completed form (as attachment) to your Building Principal.
3. If the Building Principal approves the form, then the Building Principal will send the form to the Central Office for Approval. Email the form to the Pupil Personnel Administrative Assistant-currently Mrs. Mercer.
4. Additional Information can be found under the "Field Trip Request" Section of this Manual.



Field Trip Hours

School Days: 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. (Does not apply to athletics)
Special Education buses must be back by 1:30 p.m.
Exceptions may apply.

Please contact the Transportation Department, if you have questions at 804-443-2150, before planning a field trip.

Weekends & Holidays: Must have Superintendent and School Board approval.



General Rules and Guidelines

Breaks / Meals:

Drivers are to remain on site of destination unless parking of the bus is not available. The driver MUST notify the trip sponsor of where and how long he/she will be away from the location. Bus and Driver are NOT permitted to transport passengers for meals unless PRE-AUTHORIZED by the building Administrator in advance of the trip.

Cancellation of Trip:

If the trip is canceled or the number of buses needed is less than what was requested, notify the Transportation Department as soon as possible. If the trip needs to be rescheduled, contact the Transportation Department for available dates.

Capacity:

This will allow When requesting a bus for a trip, please keep in mind the number of students, and equipment to be transported, etc.

The Director of Transportation will determine if additional vehicle(s) are needed and/or available, based on State Guidelines.

Wheelchair buses have different capacities – complete the Field Trip Request Form and contact the Transportation Department with your specific equipment needs.

More information about Special Needs Buses are listed below.

Cell Phones:

Cell phones and other electronic devices are permitted while riding the school bus. However, students may not use cell phones or any electronic device to take pictures, video, record, text to or receive text from others of inappropriate comments or content while riding the bus. Also, cell phones and electronic devices may not be a disruption on the school bus (Per ECPS Student Code of Conduct).

Chaperones:

Drivers are NOT permitted to leave for or return from a destination without a chaperone on the bus. The School Bus Driver is responsible for the proper operation of the vehicle during boarding, un-boarding and transit. Chaperones are responsible for enforcing bus rules and maintaining a safe environment aboard the bus during the field trip. The driver also has the authority to give instruction to all passengers when the safety and welfare of the students is involved. We like to use a 1:8 ratio of chaperones to students.

Clean Buses:

The Transportation Department and School Bus Driver will ensure that the bus is clean prior to a trip. After a trip, the trip sponsor is responsible for the inspection of the bus to make sure all trash is picked up along with the collection of lost / found articles. The driver will have garbage bags available for clean up. The Transportation Department will ensure the buses are cleaned after every trip.

Clear Aisles:

At all time, the bus driver will maintain a clear and unobstructed path to the emergency equipment and exits. No articles will be allowed to block the view from any window in the bus. No books, band instruments, athletic equipment, etc. shall be transported in the driver's compartment or placed in the aisles.

Field Trip Requests:

1. Complete the Field Trip Request Form.
2. Submit the Field Trip Request Form to your Building Principal.
3. Once approved, the Building Principal will submit the form to the Central Office-Pupil Personnel Department.
4. All field trip requests for the school year SHOULD be submitted by the Building Principal to the Central Office by **August 25th**.
 - a. However, unexpected field trip requests can be submitted during the school year.
 - b. Please submit them at least 30 days before the scheduled trip. This will be enough time for the School Board to review and consider the request.
5. Once the Central Office receives the request, it will be reviewed with the Transportation Supervisor.
 - a. If approved,
 - i. the Field Trip Request Form will be sent to the School Board Clerk for submission to the School Board for review and consideration
 - ii. the School Board Clerk will send you a copy with the Approval from the board
 - b. If denied,
 - i. from the Central Office or the School Board, then the Field Trip Request Form will be sent back to the Building Principal indicating the reason for Denial.

No phone request will be taken for Field Trips. The number of daily trips and buses allowed is limited, so the earlier the request is submitted, the better chance of approval.

All field trip requests must include the complete name, address and directions of the destination. (Exception: Athletics)

Any trip changes, i.e., cancellations, times, destinations, number of passengers, etc., must be submitted in writing (email) to Mr. Roger "Butch" Gross, Transportation Supervisor, at rgross@essex.k12.va.us

[Field Trip Request Form may be obtained by clicking here](#)

Food and Drinks:

Per ECPS Student Code of Conduct, students may not eat or drink on the bus (this includes chewing gum). The bus driver has the authority to NOT permit eating and drinking of food and beverage if passenger behavior and/or safety are compromised. If a restaurant stop is planned, it must be included on the field trip request form and also should not delay the return time during a regular school day.

Interstate Travel: *(Out of State)* Typically, Essex County Public Schools does not travel out of the State of Virginia or Washington DC. Contact Transportation Office for more information regarding "Interstate Travel".

Noise Level and Radios:

The driver and the trip sponsor will cooperate to maintain the noise level and determine any rules unique to the field trip. Cheers are allowed until the bus reaches the public roadway. For safety reasons, the noise shall be at a level of acceptance for the bus driver when the bus is on the road.

Besides the bus-equipped radio, only earphone-type radios are allowed.

Pick Up and Return Times:

Departure Time: is when you want the bus to depart at your pick-up point. The earliest scheduled leave time is 8:30 a.m.

Contact the Transportation Department before scheduling a trip that will require an earlier leave time.

Return Drop Off Time: is the return time to the departure site. The latest return time during a regular school day is 2:30 p.m. Remember when informing the bus driver the time you wish to re-board the bus for departure back to school to leave plenty of travel time. The return time to school is necessary to assure that regularly scheduled bus routes are maintained for school dismissal.

When planning travel time, keep in mind that buses DO NOT travel as fast as cars

Preschool Children:

Only pre-school children enrolled in Essex County Public Schools programs will be permitted to ride on field trip buses. The State Law regarding car seats in private vehicles for preschool age children will be enforced. Contact the Transportation Department to ensure equipment for preschool age children is available, a care or van is requested.

Return Trip:

All students transported by Essex County Public Schools school buses will be transported back to the starting destination in the same vehicle. The trip sponsor must approve exceptions. The trip sponsor will assume all responsibility of any students not returning in a school district vehicle or left behind.

Roster:

A roster of all students and adults (including teachers, coaches and parents) who will ride the bus during the trip must be kept and maintained by the trip sponsor in the event of an emergency. No Exceptions.

Special Needs Students:

Transportation of Special Needs students:

Check with the Transportation Department for availability of an ortho (lift bus) before scheduling a field trip.

Students MUST be transported with their equipment (wheelchair, walker, etc.). The equipment CANNOT be transported separately.

Contact Transportation Department for additional questions regarding the transporting of students with special needs.

Student Bus Rules:

The Student Bus Rules shall be in effect for all passengers on field trips. The Trip Sponsor and school personnel in charge are expected to have control of students and ensure that the bus rules are being followed. The School Bus is an extension of the classroom. The safety and welfare of all passengers will be maintained by the Trip Sponsor / Teacher / Coach and Parents on board the school bus during the field trip.

Van Use: (Maximum Capacity 7 (Including driver)

Essex County Public Schools requires all school employees to obtain a "Driver's License" prior to driving school district vans. Employees, who drive the van, must maintain current copy of their "driver's license" in the transportation office.

Weather Conditions:

Decisions regarding the cancellation or early return from destinations due to weather or road conditions is decided upon by the Superintendent of Schools (or designee), Trip Sponsor, Building Principal, Athletic Director and/or Transportation Supervisor.

Contact the Transportation Supervisor, if you are concerned about weather conditions prior to a trip or while on a trip. The Transportation Office Number is listed in the beginning of the manual.