

# St. Charles Catholic School Field Trip Procedures

Class visits to places of cultural or educational significance give enrichment to the lessons of the classroom. To ensure the desired outcomes of such trips, teachers or supervisors should prepare the pupils for the place that is to be visited and the things that are to be seen. A discussion will be held regarding the purpose(s) and goal(s) of the trip. An advance trip by the teacher or supervisor is suggested if possible. Field trips are privileges afforded to the students. Participation in such trips can be denied if students fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements.

The state of Indiana requires that principals keep a record on file of field trips and other educational experiences held outside of the classroom. All teachers should fill out a field trip form designating the location, date, length of time, educational purpose, and mode of transportation for the trip. This form is to be returned to the principal for approval. Once approved, permission slips may be distributed.

Permission slips will be sent home to parents a minimum of one week prior to the field trip. Times, activities and other details about the trip will be included on the on the field trip form. The mode of transportation will also be noted and parents' signature denotes acceptance of the field trip details.

Buses, school administrators, and parent drivers constitute the means of transportation for field trips. Private volunteer drivers (transportation other than buses) and vehicles must meet the following requirements:

- The driver must be 21 years of age or older.
- The driver must have a valid, non-probationary driver's license with no physical disability which would impair the ability to drive safely.
- The vehicle must have a valid registration.
- The vehicle must be insured for minimum limits of \$100,000 per person and \$300,000 per occurrence.
- All children must be individually buckled into a child restraint during transport.
- No child shall sit directly in front of an air bag.
- The driver shall not partake in any activity that would jeopardize the safety of the children (E.G., TALKING ON A CELL PHONE WHILE DRIVING).
- Permission must be given by the teacher for siblings to accompany parents acting as chaperones.
- Chaperones will remain with the whole group on the field trip for the duration of the event. They will leave together, not make unnecessary stops in-between time of arriving at the destination and return together with the group to St. Charles School, unless other arrangements are explicitly stated and agreed to by the teacher and drivers.
- All rules that apply at school for adults and children apply during the field trip (e.g. no smoking).

All volunteer drivers must sign the Volunteer Driver Agreement agreeing to meet the above requirements in order to transport students on class field trips. The Agreement will be kept on file in the school office and remain in effect throughout the current school year. If more than one parent/guardian or other family member intend to drive on field trips, they must each sign the Agreement.

The ratio of children to chaperones should be stated. The general rule is that the younger the children, the greater the standard of care. For trips other than interscholastic athletics, supervision of one (1) adult per ten (10) students is recommended. This ratio should be lower for very young children.

All permission forms should be sent to the sponsoring teacher where they will be checked for authenticity. A student who does not have a permission slip on file will not be allowed to go on the trip. A phone call from a parent will not be accepted in place of the signed form. A generic permission form is on the St. Charles web site which may be downloaded, filled out, and turned in, in the event the original permission slip cannot be found.

As of July 1, 2005, Indiana law changed with regard to child restraints. A comprehensive outline of the law can be found at: <http://www.state.in.us/legislative/ic/code/title9/ar19/ch11.html>. In summary, it states children are required to ride properly restrained in a child restraint, which can include a belt positioning booster seat (not shoulder belt positioners) until they reach their eighth birthday. Children from at least eight years old until their 16th birthday are required to ride properly restrained in a child system or seat belt in a seated position in all vehicles. Exemptions to this law are: school buses, taxicabs, ambulances, public passenger buses, motorcycles, and antique automobiles.

This new law affects field trip transportation for children in grades three and below. The majority of school field trips

are transported by parent volunteers. Teachers must make arrangements with parents and volunteer drivers in advance to ensure each child being transported has the proper child restraint.

Teachers will ensure that the school office has a contact number to reach the class on a field trip in case of emergency. For field trips at locations where first aid supplies would not be readily available, such as a park, a small first aid kit will be available in the office to take on the field trip. In the event of an emergency and a child needs to be transported back to school or to a hospital for care, the school office will be contacted immediately to contact the parent or guardian and make appropriate arrangements.