



AMERICAN ACADEMY
EDUCATE | INNOVATE | EXPLORE

Field Trip Policy

This policy was modified and approved by the American Academy Board of Directors on October 16, 2018.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the safety of students, teachers, and chaperones on field trips, thereby allowing teachers to maintain control and to maximize the learning opportunity. This policy also provides guidelines for acceptable behavior for students and chaperones, to address problems that have already occurred, and prevent new ones from occurring.

Local Field Trips

Students in kindergarten through eighth grade are provided with the opportunity to attend local, non-overnight, field trips throughout the year.

Fees and Permissions

All field trip fees are due on a designated date prior to the field trip as specified in the permission slip. In the event a student has not, by the designated date, remitted payment for fees and permission associated with a field trip, the student will not be allowed to attend the field trip. The student will remain at the School and appropriate school work or activities will be assigned.

Transportation

Transportation for trips will be provided by district buses whenever possible. While district school buses are the preferred option for transportation, daily route requirements limit bus availability. Therefore, American Academy may make arrangements to hire other available commercial buses for field trips when timeframes and costs allow. American Academy also has the option of using parent drivers to transport students.

Parent Responsibilities

If a child requires a car seat to travel in a car under Colorado Law, it is the parent's responsibility to provide a car seat for the child for the field trip. The School reserves the right to not take a child if it is determined that the child requires a car seat and one was not provided.

Parent Drivers/Chaperones

Requests for parent field trip drivers will be made by homeroom teachers or their designee. The responsibility of driving a group of students includes the requirement that all drivers must follow American Academy's guidelines and expectations for parent drivers. If a parent fails to follow these guidelines, they may be prohibited from driving in the future.

Parents will indicate their willingness to drive/chaperone on their child's field trip permission form. Parents will be notified if they have been selected as field trip drivers/chaperones. The homeroom teacher or designee will notify volunteers if they are needed for the trip, and will make every effort to provide notification of a field trip at least one week in advance. The teacher will submit a list of drivers to the office in advance so that the office can verify that the "Authorization to use Privately Owned Vehicles on School Business" form is accurate, current, and complete for each driver. Every attempt will be made to rotate parent drivers so that all parents interested in going on a field trip will be given an opportunity.

Parents not selected to chaperone or drive may not attend the field trip with their child unless they have requested in advance, and received, written permission from the teacher to attend. American Academy administration reserves the right to deny any parent permission to drive for and/or attend any trip, at any time, for any reason.

Each homeroom teacher, or their designee, will organize the transportation and determine:

- Which students each parent driver will chaperone;
- All students with emergency/rescue medication or medication scheduled to be administered while on the field trip, must be accompanied by a teacher during transportation and at the destination. All medication must be carried and administered by an American Academy employee or licensed nurse.
- Departure time;
- Route that will be taken to the destination;
- Where to assemble upon arrival;
- Where to assemble before departure from the field trip site;
- What to do if a group returns to school before the teacher.

Parent drivers will be provided with the following information:

- A map and contact information for the destination;
- Emergency contact names and phone numbers including the teacher's cell phone;
- Any additional medical information required for a student in that parent's group, including who has the medication and information on what to do in an emergency;
- Information on any allergies for students in the parent's group.

Parent Driver Guidelines

Each chaperone is responsible for abiding by the following guidelines:

- Do not use a cell phone while driving.
- File a current and correct "Authorization to Use Privately-Owned Vehicle on American Academy Business" form with the appropriate American Academy School Office, with appropriate proof of insurance.
- Actually drive the vehicle cited in the information provided to the school.
- Equip the car with the number of seat belts as required by Colorado Law for each child. If a parent is concerned that a child in their car requires a car seat and does not have one, they should bring it to the immediate attention of the teacher. Parents may provide booster seats for children who would be outside of the legal description.
- Provide only G-rated entertainment in the vehicle.
- Do not stop at any location not on the itinerary, unless permission has been granted in advance, in writing, by the teacher.
- Maintain disciplined behavior for all students in the vehicle during the trip.

Parent Chaperone Guidelines

Each chaperone is responsible for abiding by the following guidelines:

- Siblings may not attend any field trip.
- Do not talk on a cell phone for an extended conversation anytime the chaperone is responsible for students on the trip, except as required for student health, safety, welfare, or to get the students to and from the destination.
- Do not provide snacks to any student.
- Know where the students assigned to your group are at all times.
- Do not give permission to students to do anything that contradicts the written or spoken instructions of the teacher or administrator in charge.

Chaperone to Student Ratio

The American Academy adult-to-student ratio should generally be 1:10 for third through eighth grade and 1:5 for Kindergarten through second grade. This guideline applies to all local, non-overnight field trips.

Exceptions

In the event that a parent is not selected to drive on a field trip and is not comfortable allowing their student to ride with someone else, that parent may choose to drive the student to and from the field trip. The parent needs to alert the teacher as soon as possible so that all of the pertinent information can be copied and made available. The parent must deliver and pick up their child at the designated location at the designated time. If the parent is late for pick-up, the child will be returned to school with another driver or on the bus.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to display respect for others, self-restraint, and good manners on all field trips just as they are in an American Academy classroom. Behavior that violates AA rules or jeopardizes the safety of others will be documented and reported to the appropriate Principal and consequences will be determined per the Student Discipline Policy.

Disrespectful, insubordinate, or unsafe behavior on a field trip is unacceptable and may result in exclusion from activities in addition to disciplinary action at school. In extreme cases, parents will be contacted and asked to arrange for their child to be picked up immediately.

Electronic Devices

Each student is responsible for abiding by the following guidelines:

- **Cell Phones:** Student cell phones are not allowed on local field trips.
- **Digital Cameras:** Digital cameras that are only a camera may be allowed at the discretion of the trip leader.
- **All Other Electronic Devices:** All other electronic devices (e.g., smart watches, iPads/tablets, Kindles/e-readers, gaming devices) are not allowed on local field trips.

Student Attendance

American Academy academic field trips are planned to enhance learning and to provide opportunities and experiences that are not available in the classroom. Students not attending the field trips must attend school for the day where they will be given class work assigned by their teachers and will be supervised by AA staff. Should the student not attend school that day, the Attendance Policy will apply.

Overnight Field Trips

As part of the educational program at American Academy, students in grades 5–8 are offered the optional opportunity to attend overnight field trips. Parents are responsible for obtaining all the information in advance of the trip and evaluating if their child is mature enough to attend.

Eligibility

An overnight field trip is a privilege, not a right. Safety and learning of all students on the trip is the priority of the staff at all times. Students that become ineligible at any time before the trip and during the pay schedule period may not be eligible for a refund, subject to administrative discretion. Eligibility is determined at the sole discretion of the American Academy administration, taking the following factors into consideration.

- **Academic Standing:** Any child receiving a D or an F in two or more core subjects (Language Arts/English, History, Science or Math) at the close of the trimester preceding the final payment for the trip (in the current school year) and/or there are current teaching staff concerns for in-progress grades (such as consistently missing assignments) is ineligible to attend overnight field trips.
- **Behavior History:** A student is ineligible to attend overnight field trips if the student has served an in- or out-of school suspension during the current year at any time prior to the trip. In addition, if there are serious behavior or safety concerns, included but not limited to: failure to follow directions; inability to stay close to a chaperone; or a tendency to wander; demonstrated at any on or off-campus event on a prior field trip, will render the student ineligible to attend overnight trips.

Paperwork and Payments

Parents of an eligible student planning to attend an overnight field trip must complete an Overnight Field Trip Agreement and all other required paperwork no later than the deadline communicated by the trip leader. If paperwork and/or payments are not completed by the communicated deadline, the student may be excluded from the trip.

Behavior Expectations

Disrespectful, insubordinate, or unsafe behavior on a field trip is unacceptable and may result in exclusion from activities in addition to disciplinary action at school. If a student on an overnight field trip displays behavior that is insubordinate, interferes with the learning of other students, or jeopardizes the safety of students or staff, then the student may be declared ineligible to attend future overnight field trips. In extreme cases, parents may be asked to arrange for the student's immediate transportation home.

Mandatory Parent Meetings

If parents do not attend mandatory informational meeting(s) prior to the trip, the student may be excluded from the trip or excluded from registering for the trip.

Medication/Health Management

All student medication to be administered by a staff member or nurse must be disclosed by the deadline for the first deposit for that trip. The only exception is a new prescription, which must be disclosed within one week of receiving the medication. The administration reserves the right to declare a student ineligible for an overnight trip if it is apparent that the nature of the student's health condition and or medication requirements is in conflict with the demands and rigors of the field trip schedule or presents a safety concern.

Contacting Parents

Parents will be contacted in the following situations:

- **Calling Home:** Students will generally have the opportunity to call home at least once during the trip. Specific times and day(s) will be provided in advance of the trip when possible.
- **Injury/Illness:** Parents will be notified in the following cases of injury/illness, provided the injury/illness is reported by the student to the chaperones. If this level of notification is not possible on a specific trip, parents will be notified before signing up for the trip.
 - Injury requiring medical attention;
 - Fever higher than 100 degrees;
 - Diarrhea; and/or
 - Vomiting.
- **Discipline:** If a discipline issue rises to the level of a write-up, parents and principal will be contacted and consequences determined and served upon return. If, at any time, a student's behavior is impacting the safety of him/herself or others or impacting the overall trip experience for the other students, parents will be contacted and the student will be sent home.

Electronic Devices

Each student is responsible for abiding by the following guidelines:

- **Cell Phones:** Student cell phones are allowed only for the purpose of calling, texting, or emailing home at the predetermined times-- understanding that in areas with limited cell service or Wi-Fi, these times may not be able to be predetermined. Cell phones will be collected and carried by chaperones (powered off and fully charged; no chargers or charging on the trip). Cell phones will be turned off and in the custody of the chaperones at all other times. Students are welcome to use a chaperone's phone if they do not have one or if theirs runs out of battery life.
- **Digital Cameras:** Digital cameras that are only a camera are allowed. Disposable cameras (digital or otherwise) are also a good option.
- **All Other Electronic Devices:** All other electronic (e.g., smart watches, iPads/tablets, Kindles/e-readers, gaming devices) are not allowed on overnight field trips. This ensures students are truly immersed in the experience and will get the most out of their trip.

Snacks

Snacks containing nuts, high sugar (such as candy) or beverages containing caffeine or high sugar are not allowed to be packed or purchased while on the trip and may be confiscated at the discretion of the chaperones.

POLICY HISTORY

Original: approved by the BOD on June 13, 2012

Revision 1: approved by the BOD on November 11, 2014

Revision 2: approved by the BOD on January 13, 2015

Revision 3: approved by the BOD on October 25, 2016

Revision 4: approved by the BOD on October 17, 2017

Revision 5: approved by the BOD on October 16, 2018

