

For 2nd vote at MSC Meeting August 24, 2010

Proposed Draft for MSC Meeting August 10, 2010 - K Thorp

Last year the Melrose School Committee reviewed the Field Trip policy. At that time, there were no explicit administrative district procedures in place for field trips, and so the School Committee added language to the policy requiring those procedures and giving an outline of what they should contain. Over the past year, the district has developed procedures, which will be brought before the School Committee for approval. This draft removes the more procedural language as this will now be covered rightfully in the procedures.

In addition, it has been noted that the language of the policy that expresses the committee's desire to help families who are unable to afford field trips, inadvertently covered more than just the normal single day field trips that were intended. This area has been corrected in this draft as well.

STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTION 5000

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM 5200

FIELD TRIPS 5215

The School Committee recognizes that firsthand learning experiences provided by field trips are an effective and worthwhile means of learning. It is the desire of the School Committee, therefore, to encourage field trips as part of and directly related to the total school program and curriculum. In keeping with the district wide curriculum, the School Committee envisions there will be general parity of experience across the district in this regard.

The School Committee also is aware that the cost of field trips can be a concern for families. Accordingly, it is the policy of the School Committee that for single day field trips that are attended by a majority of the students in a class, no student will be denied an opportunity to participate because of the financial inability of his/her family to pay the field trip fee. Moreover, it is the desire of the School Committee to encourage the administration to keep in mind the effect of the cost of field trips on families, and to consider the educational value of field trips in relation to their costs, as well as possible lower-cost alternatives, as part of the field trip planning process.

Specific guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures shall be developed by the Superintendent to screen, evaluate and approve trips and to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the safety of the participants. The guidelines and procedures shall require, among other things, that all field trips have the prior approval of the Department Chair (for secondary field trips) and Principal (for all levels), and that all field trips involving late night or overnight travel, travel out of state or overnight stays **also** have the prior approval of the Superintendent and the School Committee. Such approvals should be obtained before trip arrangements, payments and fund raising. Additionally, the guidelines and procedures shall be designed to ensure (1) that all trips contribute

substantially to the educational program; (2) that all students have parental permission to attend field trips; and (3) that all trips are properly supervised and include precautions to protect the safety of students. The guidelines and procedures also must include plans to provide (1) reasonable accommodations for eligible students with disabilities to allow them to participate in field trips, (2) a means for subsidizing the cost of single day field trips for families deemed financially unable to pay, and (3) meaningful educational activities during the period of the field trip for students who do not participate and instead remain in school. Said guidelines and procedures shall be subject to the review and approval of the School Committee.

The School Committee or the Superintendent are authorized to cancel any field trip, up to the time of departure, whenever, in their judgment, a change in circumstances, whether man-made or natural, warrants cancellation of the trip in the interests of the safety of students and other participants. In such event, the school district will make an effort to obtain a refund of monies paid by students and parents; however, such refund is not guaranteed.

All field trip information and forms should be sent home in the language of the home, if that language is not English.

The school district, the School Committee and the City of Melrose shall not be financially liable for any costs incurred as the result of a chaperone's decision to send a student participant home earlier than the scheduled return date, due to the student's unacceptable behavior on a field trip. Students and their parents/guardians shall be responsible for any damage done by students to all real or personal property.