

## *Student Travel Policy*

### *Martha's Vineyard Public Schools*

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The School Committees of the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools encourage student travel that enriches the educational or extra-curricular experience of students at all levels. School field trips may range from an hour at Felix Neck to a weeklong trip to a foreign country and should have a direct connection to the curriculum or should generally broaden the students' overall education.

School principals may approve daylong trips within the Commonwealth as school-sponsored field trips. These trips may be taken at any time and typically involve an entire class or group. They represent a culminating class activity and often involve academic assignments and/or credit. Fund raising for these trips may be done in the school's name, and money raised will be deposited into the school's Student Activities Fund. All school rules apply, and chaperones must review and sign the Chaperone Guidelines in order to participate, including the requirement for CORI completion. Bus travel arrangements should be made directly with the Transportation Office at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School.

All student trips that include late night, overnight or out of state travel must have prior approval of the School Committee. Initial approval by the School Committee is required before engaging students in fundraising activities. The School Committee will consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to granting initial approval. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.

Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed including, but not limited to, all logistical details involving transportation, accommodation arrangements and fundraising efforts. The recommended ratio of students to chaperones is 6:1 for foreign travel and 10:1 for domestic travel.

If a school-sponsored trip involves overnight or out-of-state travel, it must get school committee approval prior to beginning fund-raising; however, organizational meetings may take place prior to that approval. Final decisions about these trips will be reserved to the school administration and School Committee. Overnight or out of state athletic and activities trips are considered to be school-sponsored and must comply with the same rules and procedures. The Athletic Director is responsible for ensuring that athletic coaches comply with these procedures and rules.

### **STUDENT TRAVEL REGULATIONS**

#### **1. Transportation**

The use of private automobiles to transport students for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel is prohibited. Late night or overnight trips will use commercial motor coaches or district vehicles.

Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will include a pre-trip check of companies, drivers, and vehicles. CORI checks will be conducted in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, §38R.

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) licenses the selected carrier for passenger transportation. The contract with the carrier will

prohibit the use of sub-contractors unless sufficient notice is given to the district that allows verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

## **2. Trip Scheduling**

Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 A.M., due to the increased risk of vehicular accidents during this time period.

Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.

Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.

If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating. *Copies of trip itineraries for all overnight trips must be on file with the school office.*

## **3. Fundraising**

*While group fundraising activities are always the preferred model, the School Committee may authorize alternative models if it can be assured that no student will be prohibited from participation due to lack of funds, that no student's fundraising will become public knowledge and that parents understand that all money collected belongs to the trip. Typically, students will not be assigned individual targets, and funds raised for school-sponsored trips will be utilized for the entire group.*

*All funds for school-sponsored trips will be handled through the school office following appropriate auditing rules. At the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, the school's Financial Manual will be followed.*

*If a school-sponsored trip is to be financially supported by a booster club, PTA(O) or other parent group which is incorporated (501c3 or other such organization), those funds must be donated to the school which will act as the fiscal agent for the trip.*

## **4. International Travel**

The School Committee recognizes the educational value of international travel for the purpose of language training and cultural enrichment. International travel requires additional planning, fundraising, and must be approved well in advance by the School Committee if it is to be a school-sponsored trip.

Groups planning international travel must gain School Committee approval before initiating fundraising. They may have a general meeting for interested families prior to this approval.

The administration will contact the State Department prior to the departure date to determine whether there are any negative travel advisories for the destination.

The school administration and School Committee reserve the right to cancel any international travel without warning for significant safety reasons. All participants and their families must be aware of this possibility.

**MARTHA'S VINEYARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**RELEASE AND CONSENT FORM  
FOR INTERNATIONAL TRIPS**

I/We, the undersigned parent(s) or guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_, a minor, do hereby consent to his/her participation in a trip/tour to \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, sponsored by the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools.

I/We, forever release, acquit, discharge and agree to hold harmless the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools and the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, its officers, employees, servants and agents, from any and all actions, causes of action, claims, demands, damages, costs, loss of services, expenses and compensation on account of, or arising out of, directly or indirectly, any personal injuries or property damage which I/We may hereafter have as the parent(s) or guardian(s) of said minor, and also all claims or rights of action for damages which said minor may acquire, either before or after he/she has reached his/her majority, resulting from his/her participation in the trip/tour herein described.

I/We acknowledge the current state of alert with regard to the threat of terrorism and international warfare and hereby release the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools from liability as a result of any injury to my child as a consequence of terrorism or war.

I/We also hereby authorized the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools, acting through its Superintendent or his/her designee, to cancel, reschedule or alter in any other manner the trip/tour hereby authorized whenever he/she determines in his/her sole discretion that such cancellation, rescheduling or alteration is required in order to protect the safety and welfare of said minor. I/We agree to release the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School and its officers, employees, servants and agents from any claim for damages, which I/We may incur by reason of such cancellation, rescheduling or alteration.

I/We further authorize the agent and/or employee of the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School who is supervising such minor while on the trip/tour to require such minor to comply with any rules, standards of behavior or instructions such agent and/or employee may reasonably establish. I/We agree that such agent and/or employee shall have the right to enforce such rules, standards of behavior or instructions and shall have the further right to terminate such minor's participation in the trip/tour at any time when such agent and/or employee considers the conduct of such minor incompatible with the interest, harmony, comfort or welfare of the other participants on the trip/tour or with the minor's own safety or welfare. Possession, sale, distribution or use of illegal drugs or alcohol will constitute grounds for terminating the student's participation. If such minor's participation is terminated, I/We consent to have such minor sent home in the most expeditions manner without refund at my/our expense. I/We accept in good faith the determination of such agents and/or employees in all matters relating to the supervision of such minor while on the trip/tour.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE(S)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT

Trip insurance must be purchased for all international trips in case of cancellation and to add additional coverage.

The committee recognizes that students may travel with groups that are not administered by the school and has no liability for such travel but will permit the administration to consider proper petitions for credit for independent work done during such travel.

Students may travel on only one trip per year that involves missing significant school time without special permission from the principal.

## 5. Health Issues

Planning for all field trips, whether daylong trips to local venues or weeklong travel to foreign countries, must consider the medical needs of all students, staff and other chaperones. At least one week prior to departure, the trip coordinator must consult with the school nurse to develop appropriate health plans and complete required paperwork. Students with special health concerns may require additional attention or specialized care while on the trip *and such attention and care must be arranged prior to departure.* Arrangements for handling medications *must* be completed prior to departure. *If students are taken to the hospital during a trip, school staff or other chaperones must accompany them and remain with them until a parent/guardian arrives.*

{ADOPTION DATE}

1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	-	05.07.2009 (Oak Bluffs, UIRSD, MVRHS)
	-	05.12.2009 (Tisbury)
	-	05.13.2009 (Edgartown)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	-	06.08.2009 (Oak Bluffs, Edgartown, UIRSD, MVRHS)
	-	06.09.2009 (Tisbury)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Reading	-	

6.29.2009