

School Committee Policy Review Subcommittee  
Monday, June 3, 2019  
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference, Town Hall

Policy Review Subcommittee members present: Mr. Glover (Chair), Ms. Monopoli, and Ms. Schreiner-Oldham.

Other School Committee members present: Dr. Abramowitz.

School Staff present: Ms. Normen, Dr. Gittens, and Ms. Coyne.

Others present: Craig Haller.

**1) Approval of Minutes**

On a motion of Mr. Glover and seconded by Ms. Monopoli, the Policy Review Subcommittee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2019 Policy Review Subcommittee meeting.

**2) Update on Proposed Changes to Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) Student Field Trip Policy**

The Subcommittee discussed the development of a revised PSB Student Field Trip Policy. Dr. Gittens referred to the current policy and possible areas for consideration in the revised policy (Attachment A). She suggested first focusing on the policy for international trips.

The Subcommittee discussed the following: transportation requirements; chaperone requirements; timeline for submitting applications; who can submit applications; notification requirement when changes are made to the itinerary; how we vet organizations; need for trip sponsors to demonstrate what the students will be learning and why it is appropriate, e.g., relates to the curriculum, is educational, or promotes service learning; how student trips are treated in the Brookline High School Student Attendance Policy (currently counted as absences); and insurance coverage (the district purchases insurance to help with the logistics of getting students home when there is an emergency, e.g., illness, this is different than trip insurance); and consequences if the policy is violated.

Mr. Glover will put together a framework for the development of a revised policy. The Subcommittee noted that some of what was discussed belongs in a policy and some should be in procedures. Ms. Normen offered to ask PTO leaders if they have any input.

**3) Update on Proposed Changes to the PSB Student Activities Fund Policy**

Mr. Glover stated that he did a reorganization of the draft policy in which he consolidated some sections and eliminated some concepts that could perhaps be handled in procedures. Ms. Normen liked the consolidations, will check whether the Superintendent can delegate responsibilities in this policy, and will make sure that the law permits shifting some of the concepts to procedures. She agreed that the section on interest could be shortened, but noted that interest earned needs to be defined and can only be used for specified purposes. The Policy should refer to other relevant PSB policies, e.g., the Signature Policy. Ms. Normen will check with the auditors on whether the Tax Exemption section needs to be in the Policy or can be in the procedures. The section on undesignated

earnings could be more general. The policy should note the requirement that the Superintendent must approve all student organizations that receive support from the Town or PSB and/or use the Town, PSB, or a school name. This should also be covered in the procedures. The policy should note that not all student organizations are tax-exempt and suggest that potential donors consult with their accountant. In response to a question, Ms. Normen stated that a staff member receives a stipend of \$10,000-\$15,000 to serve as bookkeeper. This cost is not currently covered through Student Activity fees. Mr. Glover will clarify the sections on “funds raised or donated” and “sunshine funds” (casual collection of money for things not student club related).

Mr. Glover will revise the draft policy based on this evening’s discussion and send it to Ms. Normen for further review. Ms. Normen would like to solicit feedback from the auditors and then from school leaders and PTO Treasurers. Once Ms. Normen gets input, the draft policy could come back to the Policy Subcommittee and the School Committee in the fall.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

***Purpose and Scope***

The Brookline School Committee (BSC) recognizes that first-hand experiences provided by field trips and school-sponsored trips are a most effective and worthwhile means of learning; therefore, the BSC encourages that field trips and school-sponsored trips of significant educational value, which are related to the total school program and curriculum. Additionally, due to the inherent educational value of field trips and school-sponsored trips, it is the BSC's goal that all students be able to participate in and have equal access to field trips and school-sponsored trips.

Consistent with this goal, the Superintendent of the Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) shall establish guidelines for field trips and school sponsored trips. These guidelines shall address the process for screening, evaluating and approving field trips and school-sponsored trips in order to ensure that all steps are taken for the health, safety and welfare of the participants and to ensure no substantial disruption to the educational process and the inherent educational value of the field trip and/or school-sponsored trip. Additionally, the guidelines shall provide that no student shall be denied participation in a field trip or school-sponsored trip as a consequence or form of punishment for previous behavior for which he/she already has been disciplined.

A student may only be excluded from a field trip or school-sponsored trip if the date or dates of his/her suspension or expulsion from school for a violation of school-based rules or the codes of conduct coincides with the scheduled date or dates of the field trip or school-sponsored trip, or if, in the judgment of the principal, a student's previous or current behavior poses a substantial risk to the health, safety and welfare of the student, other students and/or staff participating in the field trip and/or school-sponsored event. The guidelines also should require the prior approval of all field trips or school-sponsored trips by the principal, and the prior approval by the Superintendent of Schools and/or his/her designee of all overnight and out-of-state or out-of-country trips.

Furthermore, the guidelines shall establish procedures to assure that:

- (i) all students have parental/guardian permission for trips;
- (ii) all trips are properly supervised,
- (iii) all safety precautions are observed,
- (iv) all student files have been reviewed to determine if any accommodations or modifications are required in order for a student to participate in and have equal access to any field trip or school-sponsored trip;
- (v) all trips contribute substantially to the educational program;
- (vi) the district is monitoring whether students are excluded from participation in and/or having equal access to field trips and/or school-sponsored trips and, if so, for what reasons; and
- (vii) there are procedures in place for parents/guardians to appeal a decision to exclude a student from participation and access to a field trip and/or school-sponsored trip.

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Field Trip Policy

Field trips and school-sponsored trips require approval of the Brookline School Committee. Approval of all field trips and school-sponsored trips shall be conditional. Approval for any field trip or school-sponsored trip may be revoked if a change in circumstances, whether man-made or natural, would warrant cancellation of this field trip or school sponsored trip in the interest of the safety of the students and staff of the PSB.

The PSB and the BSC will not be responsible for any financial obligations incurred as a result of the planning of the field trip or school-sponsored trip, or for any monies that are non-refundable or are otherwise lost due to the subsequent cancellation of the field trip or school-sponsored trip or due to a student's exclusion from participation and access to a field trip or school-sponsored trip as a result of the student's suspension or expulsion from school on the date or dates of the field trip or school-sponsored trip.

No student shall be denied participation in a field trip or school-sponsored trip that takes place during the school day because of financial inability to pay the fee. Each club, team or group is responsible for raising all of the money necessary to fund a field trip or school-sponsored trip that is being proposed by a group of students. No fundraising or other preparations for a field trip or school-sponsored trip should occur until the field trip or school-sponsored trip has been approved. No financial support will be available from the PSB or the BSC for any overnight, out-of-state or out-of-country travel unless an athletic team or academic team or competition has qualified for an overnight, out-of-state or out-of-country competition and in these narrow circumstances final approval of funding for such travel by an athletic team or academic team is subject to final approval by the Superintendent.

The PSB and the BSC will not be responsible for any expenses incurred as a 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. Students and their parents/guardians will be held responsible for any damage done to hotels, rental properties, real or personal property. Parents/guardians must agree to pay for any damages that may be done by their son/daughter and/or aid school officials in collecting money necessary to do so.

For all field trips requiring transportation, transportation must be provided by a common carrier that is licensed to do business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is licensed for passenger transport by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, or in an approved Public Schools of Brookline licensed vehicle or by public transportation, such as the MBTA, bus, train or other form of public transportation.

All charter services for field trips or school-sponsored trips must be provided by a common carrier that is licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to provide charter services and is licensed for passenger transport by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. All vendors that provide transportation for field trips or school-sponsored trips must provide evidence that their driver(s) are licensed by a government agency in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to drive the vehicles being used to provide the transportation for the field trips and/or the charter services for the field trips. All transportation vendors also must maintain liability insurance with a minimum of \$500,000 (five hundred thousand dollars) per occurrence for bodily injury. No transportation vendor shall be used to provide transportation and/or charter services for field trips or school-sponsored trips if it has a rating of "conditional" or

**Comment [1]:** this doesn't make sense for out of state trips that require transportation.

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"unsatisfactory" issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Nothing in this field trip policy should be construed to prohibit field trips where students travel by means of walking.

**Comment [2]:** what are expectations of carriers outside of the US?

Use of privately owned vehicles or leased vans to transport students to and from field trips, athletic events or school sponsored trips are strictly prohibited, except in the case of emergency. Determination of the existence of an emergency will be made by the principal and/or lead chaperone if the principal is not present. Staff and parents/guardians who use their own vehicles risk being legally liable for any injury a student sustains while in the vehicle.

Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with safety and security in mind and, whenever possible, travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. should be avoided, trip itineraries should leave enough room for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense and take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic and unanticipated factors.

When on field trips, all PSB chaperones are considered to be at work. This means that chaperones are not to engage in the use of alcohol or tobacco during field trips or school sponsored trips. The student to chaperone ratio should be 10 to 1. While we encourage parents to attend field and school sponsored trips, every effort should be made to meet the 10 to 1 ratio with PSB employees. Any parents who chaperone trips must be cleared through the CORI/SORI system with PSB.

All staff chaperoning out-of-the-country school sponsored trips, must be trained by a designated field trip trainer each time they will chaperone an out-of-the-country field or school sponsored trip.

Other areas to consider for policy

Purpose of field trips	Curricular/Educational Field Trip Cultural Field Trip Community Building Field Trip Service Learning Field Trip
Primary responsibility for field trips	Who is this? Teacher, principal, coordinator?
Written language	Are permission slips translated into home language?
Timeline for submission of field trip requests	How far in advance are field trips requests required? (Day trips, overnight, international)
Transportation	Do we have preferred vendors? Do we use our own transportation department?
Financial assistance?	What is required? How is financial assistance

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Field Trip Policy

	gained?
Preparation for trips	How are students prepared for trips?
Safety procedures and guidelines	What safety requirements should be a part of the policy?
Accessibility	How do students and staff who are differently abled have access to trips?
Notification of colleagues of field trips	Do we have any requirements for this?
Current background checks for all chaperones	Should this be in the policy? How long is a background check good for? (this needs to be part of larger PSB policy). Time frame for requests for background checks?
Chaperones	Ratios? Ages? Number of PSB employees required based on type of field trip? Students with IEPs? What are chaperones obligated to? Can chaperones bring their children on trips?
Emergency protocols	Do we want to mention the requirement of safety procedures or planning as part of the policy?
Requirements for sleeping arrangements?	Maximum number of students in a room? Number of students to a bed?
Parental Authorization	Medicine administration Emergency care International travel/flights
CPR/First Aid training	Do we want a level of competence for chaperones? For different types of field trips?
Swimming/Water activities	Do we allow recreational swimming? What are the expectations? What about trips for the swim team? What are expectations? Cruises? Kayaking? Canoeing?
Student exclusion or self exclusion from field trips	What is required for these situations?
Recruiting diverse student and chaperones	What are the expectations for diversity?
Student attendance	How is student attendance marked?
Independent travel	Can students travel independently during a

	<p>field trip? Can students travel independently to a field trip? Can families who live where a field trip is being held pick a student up to spend time with them?</p>
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