

## RIVER OAK CHARTER SCHOOL

### SCHOOL-SPONSORED TRIPS/FIELD TRIPS

*POLICY ADOPTED: 12/14/17*

All school-sponsored trips/field trips are subject to this policy.

The River Oak Charter School Charter Council ("Charter Council") recognizes that school-sponsored trips are important components of the River Oak Charter School ("ROCS") regular instructional program and of a student's development. Besides supplementing and enriching learning experiences, such trips encourage new interests among students, make them more aware of community resources, and help them relate their school experiences to the outside world. The Charter Council requires that appropriate planning in respect to certain standards be completed before approval is granted for a school-sponsored trip. The required standards are:

1. Correlation of the trip with curricular or activity objectives of ROCS;
2. Protection of the safety of all persons taking the trip;
3. Provision for appropriate supervision of students;
4. Consideration for the financial impact of trip costs on the ROCS budget, and
5. Limitation of ROCS's exposure to liability by any aspect of the trip.

The Administrator shall be responsible for due diligence in satisfying the required standards.

The Administrator shall approve no activities which he or she considers to be inherently dangerous to students or to pose unacceptable, unmitigated risks.

Approved participants for the trip shall include only:

1. Enrolled students who are registered in the class for which the field trip is intended—students must be enrolled on the day(s) of the trip;
2. Approved parents/guardians;
3. Other approved adult chaperones;
4. ROCS employees;
5. Non-enrolled siblings of a student who is attending the field trip, but only if pre-approved by the class teacher, and for whom an annual Excursion Waiver form is on file with the office.

Participants shall not include:

1. Enrolled students who are **not** registered in the class for which the field trip is intended;
2. Persons not included on the "approved participants" list above.

#### **Trip Approval**

**Day Trips:** Teachers planning a day trip shall submit a "Field Trip Request and Approval Form"

to the Administrator at least two (2) weeks prior to the date desired. Whenever practical, an alternate date should also be listed. The purpose of the trip and its relation to the course of study shall be stated in the request. The Administrator shall approve or disapprove a day trip request and notify the teacher. If disapproved, the Administrator should state the reasons.

**Overnight Trips:** Teachers planning an overnight trip shall submit a “Field Trip Request and Approval Form” to the Administrator at least five (5) weeks prior to the date desired. Whenever practical, an alternate date should also be listed. The purpose of the trip and its relation to the course of study shall be stated in the request. Additional trip information shall be submitted to the office manager before final approval including, but not limited to a detailed trip itinerary, a list of volunteers and ROCS employees attending the trip, evidence that the volunteers have met school standards for chaperones and drivers, evidence that trip transportation has met school standards for use on school-sponsored trips, and contact information for all periods of the trip. The Charter Council shall approve or disapprove an overnight trip at a regular Charter Council meeting prior to the trip departure date. The Administrator shall notify the teacher of the Charter Council’s action. If disapproved, the Administrator should state the reasons.

The Administrator shall approve no activities which he or she considers to be inherently dangerous to students or to pose unacceptable, unmitigated risks.

### **Water Activities**

The Administrator will approve certain water activities aligned with grade level curriculum and as part of an organized program. If swimming, rafting, boating, or kayaking are involved certified lifeguard/s must be present, and standard water safety regulations shall be closely monitored and strictly followed. Water activities that involve wading (i.e. tide pooling, river clean-up, or panning for gold) require the presence of at least one adult who is CPR-certified and first aid-certified. All classes will be granted the right to beach and river access, if the trip is approved in a timely manner through required avenues and meets policy regulations. No class will participate in water activities that have not been approved prior to departure of the trip.

Possible curriculum-significant trips:

K-8	beach and/or river trips;
Grade 3	river clean-up, farm trip incorporating water activities;
Grade 4	fishing (Fort Ross), tide pooling, panning for gold, swimming;
Grade 5	tide pooling (Botanical Gardens);
Grade 6	tide pooling (Woodlands Science Camp), rafting;
Grade 7	rafting (Ashland, Oregon), boat trip, and
Grade 8	rafting, kayaking, swimming.

**Waiver, Indemnity**

ROCS hereby waives and releases any and all claims it may have against Ukiah Unified School District ("UUSD") with respect to any and all injuries, damages, claims, and/or assertions arising out of ROCS' students' contact with a body of water on a field trip.

In addition, ROCS expressly agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless UUSD from and against any and all claims, damages, costs, expenses, or other liability asserted by a ROCS student or a third party, which claim arises out of or relates to ROCS' students' contact with a body of water on a field trip, or ROCS' failure to follow ROCS' policy with respect to student contact with bodies of water on a field trip. This indemnity shall cover all costs, attorney fees, expenses, and liabilities incurred in the defense of any above-referenced claim or any action or proceeding brought thereon. If any action or proceeding is brought against UUSD on the basis of any such claim, ROCS upon notice from UUSD shall defend the same at ROCS' expense by counsel satisfactory to UUSD. UUSD shall be entitled to participate in such action by additional counsel, at UUSD's own expense. ROCS shall be entitled to control the terms upon which any such claim is resolved or settled, subject to UUSD's reasonable consent, which shall not be unreasonably withheld. UUSD agrees to promptly notify ROCS upon becoming aware of any claim within the scope of this indemnity.

**Supervision**

Students must have written parental permission in order to participate in trips requiring transportation. ROCS shall provide an alternative educational experience for students whose parents/guardians do not wish them to participate in a trip.

Students on approved trips are under the jurisdiction of the Charter Council and subject to ROCS rules and regulations.

Teachers or other certificated personnel shall accompany students on all trips and shall assume responsibility for their proper conduct. Teachers shall sign a "Field Trip Teacher's Agreement Form" prior to the trip.

Before the trip, teachers shall provide any adult chaperones who may accompany the students with clear information regarding their responsibilities. Chaperones shall sign a "Field Trip Chaperone Agreement Form" prior to the trip.

Chaperones shall be 21 years of age or older.

Chaperones shall be assigned a prescribed group of students and shall be responsible for the continuous monitoring of these students' activities.

Teachers and chaperones shall not consume alcoholic beverages or use controlled substances while accompanying and supervising students on a trip.

When a trip is made to a place of business or industry, the teacher shall arrange for an employee of the host company to serve as conductor.

**Adults who supervise students on overnight field trips shall be fingerprinted for criminal background clearance and approved at least 15 days prior to the date of departure.**

### **Parental Notification and Permission**

Parents should be notified at least one (1) week in advance of day field trips.

Parents should be notified at least four (4) weeks in advance of overnight field trips. The purpose of this notice is to inform parents of any special items, i.e., down sleeping bags, etc. they may need to borrow or purchase in order to outfit their child appropriately and to notify parents of estimated costs to allow time to budget for their financial contribution.

Parent permission must be given in writing prior to a pupil being allowed to participate in any special student trip. Annual parent permission slips may be filed by parent/legal guardian for ongoing local, walking field trips. However, for any walking field trip, the Administrator or designee may require separate, specific, parent permission slips.

### **Student Participation**

The Administrator may exclude from a field trip any student whose presence on the trip would pose a safety or disciplinary risk.

No student shall be denied the opportunity to take part in a field trip which is related to classroom instruction because of an inability to pay for admission fees, lunches, or any other costs.

The certificated teacher shall provide an alternative educational experience for students whose parents/guardians do not wish them to participate in a field trip or who have been excluded from the field trip.

Teachers will provide the ROCS office with a list of students participating in the trip, absent students and non-participating students (with the name of the teacher responsible for the non-participating students) prior to departure.

### **Funding**

No student shall be required to pay the costs of transportation, admission fees, or any other costs related to field trips which are deemed a part of the instructional program.

No trip shall be authorized if any student would be excluded from participation because of lack of sufficient funds.

Fundraising activities may be necessary to make a trip possible for all students. All parent funding requests shall be termed "contributions". Special trip expense funds shall be received, deposited, accounted for, and distributed by the school business manager.

### **Safety and First Aid**

The Administrator shall ensure that teachers develop plans which provide for the safety of students and their proper supervision by certificated staff on all school-sponsored trips as well as a careful fiscal plan for each trip. Other ROCS employees and parents/guardians also may participate in this supervision and may be asked to attend preparatory training sessions, and/or meetings.

While conducting a trip, the teacher, employee or agent of ROCS shall have the ROCS's first aid kit in his/her possession or immediately available. Whenever trips are conducted in areas known to be infested with poisonous snakes:

- a. The first aid kit taken on the trip shall contain medically accepted snakebite remedies.
- b. The trip shall be accompanied by a teacher, employee or agent of ROCS who has completed a first aid course which is certified by the American Red Cross and which emphasizes the treatment of snakebites.

Before each trip, the Administrator or designee shall hold a meeting for staff, parents/guardians and students to discuss safety and the importance of safety-related rules for the trip. For non-certificated adults who will assist in supervising students on the trip, the Administrator or designee may also hold a meeting to explain how to keep appropriate groups together and what to do if an emergency occurs.

### **Adult/Student Ratio**

Adult/student supervision ratio must be observed at all times during the field trip or excursion. Overnight trips which include both male and female students shall also include male and female adult supervisors of sufficient number to carry out appropriate chaperoning duties. Local walking field trips shall include the following adult supervision:

Grade K – 3: Teacher + 3 adults  
Grade 4 – 6: Teacher + 2 adults  
Grade 7 – 8: Teacher + 1 adult

Students are under the jurisdiction of the Charter Council at all times during the field trip or excursion and school rules are to be adhered to at all times. Horseplay, practical jokes, harassment, taunting, rough play, aggressive or violent behavior, profanity, viewing of pornographic material and use of alcohol or controlled substances during the field trip or excursion are strictly prohibited.

### **Transportation**

ROCS-sponsored groups shall travel to and from all events in ROCS-approved transportation. Trips will normally depart from ROCS and return students to ROCS unless other provisions are made. ROCS-approved transportation includes:

- a. Private or Employee Vehicle Transportation:  
Private, i.e., parent or volunteer, or employee vehicle transportation may be used if approved by the Administrator or designee. Parents must be notified if private transportation is to be used.
- b. Passenger Van Transportation:  
Passenger vans may be used if approved by the Administrator. The maximum number of passengers that can be transported is nine (9) passengers plus one approved adult driver. If the vehicle that is being used for transportation has more than ten (10) seat belts, the Administrator must verify before the vehicle departs for the trip, that there are only nine (9) passengers plus the driver in the vehicle, or that the extra seat(s) has been removed.
- c. School Pupil Activity Buses ("SPAB"):  
SPAB vehicles may be used, when private carriers are contracted, if approved by the Administrator. When such vehicles are used, the Administrator will assure parents and the public that bus carriers and drivers are in compliance with applicable California laws and regulations.

The school Administrator will take the following precautions:

- 1. Ask whether the carrier ROCS proposes to use has certified SPAB vehicles and drivers.
- 2. Ask the California Highway Patrol for the carrier's latest terminal inspection rating. If the rating is unsatisfactory, the carrier shall not be employed.
- 3. Ask the carrier how many of their buses and drivers are SPAB certified.
- 4. Determine that the carrier's level of insurance is adequate.
- 5. Advise the carrier that ROCS accepts only certified buses and drivers.
- 6. Advise the carrier that ROCS personnel will verify certification at the trip location.

Questions regarding SPAB requirements or use may be directed to the local office of the California Highway Patrol or CDE's Office of School Transportation at (916) 375-7100.

#### **Employee or Volunteer Use of Private Vehicles**

- a. ROCS shall permit the use of privately-owned vehicles in the transporting of students on "field trips," "athletic trips," and/or "activity trips".
- b. Before private transportation is utilized, parent notification and permission that a student is to be transported by private transportation is required.
- c. Employees or volunteers assisting ROCS by transporting students in privately owned vehicles must be informed that ROCS DOES NOT provide insurance coverage for the driving of and transporting of such students.

- d. Each employee or volunteer providing a privately owned vehicle in the conduct of ROCS field trips/athletic trips and/or activity trips shall have been accepted as a qualified driver under the standards established by ROCS. Proof of such acceptability will be obtained on each employee or volunteer from the State Department of Motor Vehicles ("DMV").

Such proof of qualification shall be in the form of:

- 1. Photocopy of valid California driving license; and
  - 2. A valid DMV printout (K4 or H6) which must not include speeding, reckless driving or any moving violation within the last 12 months calculated from the date of conviction. Any driving record which indicates a history of driving violations will be denied. Any alcohol or drug related driving infraction may be cause for denial. The Administrator or designee shall have the authority to issue an authorized written waiver for any DMV printout that does not meet with the above standards. A copy shall be kept at the school site. A DMV Driver Record downloaded from the DMV website is not an official record and may not be submitted as proof of qualification.
- e. Employees or volunteers permitted to use personal cars for ROCS use must provide proof of vehicle insurance.

Such proof of insurance shall be in the form of:

- 1. A letter from the insurance agent/company indicating the name of the carrier, effective dates of the policy, policy number, and limits of liability; or
- 2. Photocopy of policy face sheet; or
- 3. Certificate of Insurance.

Minimum insurance coverage acceptable to ROCS shall be:

- 1. Bodily Injury Liability \$100,000/\$300,000 each accident
  - 2. Property Damage \$50,000
  - 3. Medical Payments \$2,000
- f. Each vehicle's insurance coverage is primary, and ROCS's insurance program is excess over the basic coverage of the employee or volunteer transporting students on each fieldtrip/athletic trip and/or activity trip. All authorized drivers shall understand they are primarily liable in the event of an accident or injury resulting from such use of a private vehicle.
- g. Authorized drivers shall be required to:

1. Carry only the number of passengers for which the vehicle was designed, normally, one for each seat belt. Trucks may not transport more persons that can safely sit in the passenger compartment.
2. Require passengers to use their seat belts.
3. Assure compliance with California Buckle-up law: Each child shall be properly restrained in a child safety seat, booster seat or other restraint system in the back seat, until the child is 8 years old OR at least 4'9" in height.
4. Ensure that the manufacturer's recommendations for his/her vehicle are followed regarding the seating of children in seats equipped with airbags.
5. Abstain from, and require any other persons to abstain from smoking or have in his/her immediate possession a lighted pipe, cigar, or cigarette containing tobacco or any other plant when there is a minor in the motor vehicle, whether the motor vehicle is in motion or at rest. (Health and Safety Code [118948](#))

h. Private Car Use—Disclaimer

1. ROCS is a self-funded, self-insured public entity.
2. All persons driving on ROCS business shall take the most direct route possible and shall not take on any unauthorized passengers.

- i. A "Voluntary Driver – Verification of Insurance" form must be completed by a volunteer or employee willing to provide student transportation as outlined in this regulation.

Vehicle clearance shall be understood to mean:

1. Tires are apparently road worthy.
2. Brakes are apparently adequate.
3. Overall condition is suitable.
4. At least one exterior mirror (left side) is visible.
5. The interior rear-view mirror is visible and usable.
6. The exhaust system appears to be in working order (no loud noises, etc.)
7. All lights are working properly, including brake lights and turn signals.
8. The size of the vehicle is suited to the demands of the trip.
9. Seat belts are available for use by each passenger and the driver.
10. No fluids are leaking from vehicle.

ROCS retains the right to inspect any vehicle used and to request proof of all requirements above.

- j. All employees or volunteers willing to provide student transportation for 1-day daytime "field trips," "athletic trips," and/or "activity trips" as outlined in this regulation must be approved by the Administrator or designee prior to the undertaking of the trip.



- k. All employees or volunteers willing to provide student transportation for overnight “field trips,” “athletic trips,” and/or “activity trips” as outlined in this regulation must be approved by the Charter Council prior to the undertaking of the trip.

### **Waiver-Parent Transportation**

With the approval of the Administrator or designee, a parent/legal guardian may transport his/her own pupil to or from a “field trip,” “athletic trip,” and/or “activity trip”. The parent/legal guardian must submit a “Waiver-Parent Transportation” form to the teacher and have received written confirmation at least twenty-four hours in advance of the event. A copy is to be filed in the school office. When the pupil is to be released at the conclusion of an event or activity, the teacher shall release the pupil only to the pupil’s parent/legal guardian.

### **Records**

The ROCS office shall maintain field trip records for each trip. Files shall include, but are not limited to, trip approval forms, itineraries, permission slips, chaperone agreements, teacher agreements, drivers’ information, vehicle information, and may include criminal background (fingerprint) clearance records for adult volunteers who chaperone students on overnight trips.