

HARVEST RIDGE COOPERATIVE CHARTER SCHOOL
FIELD TRIPS & CULTURAL EXCURSIONS

Harvest Ridge Cooperative Charter School (“HRCCS” or the “Charter School”) recognizes and supports the concept of connecting our students with the broader community, both locally and globally, by providing field trips, cultural and art experiences, community service opportunities, and environmental education to fulfill the Charter School’s mission and philosophy. These activities help to promote tolerance, understanding, and acceptance of others, and enrich the educational experiences of the students, as well as meet the Charter School’s goal of creating passionate life-long learners. When a student is alert, observant, curious, reflective and respectful, learning and growth can occur anywhere, at any time, and, as educators, we must facilitate this dynamic process. There is no boundary to learning.

The safety and security of our students is a primary priority when planning or participating in field trips or excursions. These activities will be carried out in an appropriate manner to maximize and ensure student safety and to minimize the Charter School’s legal liability and financial cost.

The teaching team will continue to research and provide enriching learning opportunities to share with their students both within the classroom and out in the broader community.

Definition

A field trip or excursion is defined as students leaving Charter School grounds.

Monitoring Field Trips and Excursions

The teaching team is encouraged to plan, promote, and produce appropriate, effective, exciting and valuable educational field trips and excursions to expand student knowledge base and growth.

The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that the field trips and excursions have an adequate number of adults attending and are monitored and continually evaluated, thereby ensuring that the activities promote the philosophy, goals and objectives of the Charter School’s educational program.

A first aid kit shall be in the possession of the sponsoring teacher or accompanying the HRCCS employee at all times during the student field trip or excursion.

Field Trip and Excursion Planning and Approval

The Executive Director will ensure that the following items will be adhered to for all Charter School field trips and excursions:

- 1.) The proposed field trip or excursion relates to the Charter School’s educational objectives
- 2.) The correct ratio of adult to students is met for supervision of the activity
- 3.) Adequate restroom facilities, food and water will be available during the activity

Overnight field trips and excursions that are not organized through the Harvest Ridge Parent Teacher Organization require both the above procedure and Board approval.

Even though we have a policy of inclusion, there may be a situation when the Executive Director must use his or her discretion to exclude a student from a field trip or excursion when that student's presence and participation would pose a safety or disciplinary risk. The Executive Director shall not approve any activity that he/she considers to be inherently dangerous to students.

Permission Slips

In an effort to be efficient and environmentally sensitive, parents/guardians will have the option of signing one permission slip form at the beginning of each year authorizing their child(ren) to attend any walking field trip that is planned during the school year. Parents/guardians may instead, elect to receive and sign individual permission slips for each walking field trip or excursion throughout the year. Additionally, Parents will receive and sign individual permission slips for all other field trips throughout the school year, and will be given advance notice of each field trip or excursion. Notwithstanding any other portion of this policy, all overnight and out-of-state field trips require an individual permission slip.

The permission slip will include a waiver of all claims against the Charter School, its employees, and the State of California for injury, accident, illness or death occurring during or by reason of the field trip or excursion. Items that will be included on the permission slip are:

- 1.) An emergency phone number for the student
- 2.) Any medications the student is required to take with the time and dosage required
- 3.) Any medications the student is allergic to
- 4.) Any other medical information necessary to ensure the student's safety

A copy of a completed and signed permission slip will be kept on the Charter School site by the Executive Director and one copy will be given to the teacher to take on the field trip or excursion. Walking field trip forms will be regularly updated to keep all information current.

Accident Insurance

The Charter School provides student accident insurance which covers medical expenses arising from student injuries on campus or while participating in a Charter School-sponsored off campus activity. The family's health insurance is primary, but if there is no health insurance, the Charter School's Student Accident Insurance becomes primary. Information and applications for student accident insurance are available from the Executive Director.

Supervision of Field Trips and Excursions

The teacher who coordinated the field trip will be present to supervise the field trip or excursion. The Executive Director will be designated as the emergency contact for the group on the field trip or excursion. Any injuries or unusual incidents occurring during the field trip or excursion will be documented in writing by the coordinating teacher and given to the Charter School's Executive Director.

HRCCS employees or volunteers shall not consume alcohol or use controlled substances (except for medications taken under a physician's orders) while accompanying and supervising students on a field trip or excursion.

Students are under the jurisdiction of the Board at all times during the field trip or excursion and Charter 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 and/or controlled substances during the field trip or excursion are strictly prohibited.

Parent or Guardian Participation in Field Trips and Excursions

As field trips and excursions are an integral part of the Charter School learning experience, parents are encouraged to participate in an assisting role with students. The Executive Director or the coordinating teacher will provide parents and guardians with specific supervisory guidelines prior to any Charter School group trip involving students. Topics to be included are: safety regulations, emergency responses, and responsibilities of the parent volunteers and language or behavior requirements of all attendees.

A parent or guardian will be assigned to a specific group of students to supervise and will be responsible for these students at all times during the field trip or excursion. Under no circumstances will a parent or guardian consume alcohol or use controlled substances (except for medications taken under a physician's orders) during a field trip or excursion. The parent or guardian will notify the coordinating teacher, in advance of the field trip or excursion, should he/she be under a physician's orders and using medications.

All parents or guardians volunteering to chaperone field trips and excursions are required to sign a waiver of all claims against the Charter School, its employees, and the State of California for injury, accident, illness or death occurring during or by reason of the field trip or excursion.

Transportation

At all times during the field trip or excursion, teachers, staff and parents will use the safest mode of transportation and the safest and most direct routes of travel. If travel is by van, the legal occupancy limit must not be exceeded, all speed notices must be strictly adhered to and students are to be seated with individual seatbelts at all times.

The Charter School shall take reasonable precautions to ensure that all employees and volunteers who transport students are responsible and capable operators of the vehicles to be used.

Employee or volunteer drivers who offer to provide transportation for a field trip or excursion must provide a copy of the following (also referred to as a "Parent Driver Packet"):

- Proof of liability insurance for their vehicle with a minimum of \$100K/\$300K coverage,
- A copy of their Driver's License and Car Registration,
- A written statement acknowledging that their insurance carrier is the primary agent responsible for insurance during the field trip or excursion,

- A criminal background check conducted by the California Department of Justice (“DOJ”). Employees or volunteers whose DOJ report reveals a Driving Under the Influence conviction shall not be permitted to transport students or operate any vehicle on HRCCS business for ten (10) years from the date of the conviction. Any employee or volunteer convicted of a felony shall not be permitted to transport HRCCS students on Charter School business.
- A Department of Motor Vehicles record. Employees or volunteers with driving records with two (2) points or more shall not be permitted to transport students or operate any vehicle for Charter School field trips and excursions.

The Parent Driver Packet will be provided to the Executive Director or designee or coordinating teacher prior to driving on a field trip or excursion and must be resubmitted annually. Under no circumstances shall students transport other students.

Rules for Parent/Volunteer Drivers on Day Field Trips

For the volunteer’s safety and that of all the students in his/her car, the following rules apply:

1. All Charter School rules apply to students in the volunteer’s car. Volunteer drivers are free to appropriately manage student behavior as necessary to maintain safety.
2. All California driving laws must be followed including child restraint laws: no texting or distracted driving, hands-free phone use only.
3. No movies may be shown in vehicles, unless approved by the coordinating teacher.
4. No side trips allowed, including gasoline stops, unless approved by the coordinating teacher. Please be sure to have enough gas before leaving on the trip.
5. Maps and directions from the teacher should be reviewed prior to leaving.
6. No purchases for students should be made on the field trip including food or treats for students in the car, unless approved by the coordinating teacher.
7. Call the Charter School office immediately if there is a problem.

Defraying Expenses of Field Trips and Excursions

HRCCS may charge a fee for field trips and excursions pursuant to section 35330 of the Education Code. However, HRCCS will endeavor to keep the costs of any field trips affordable for all students’ families. In addition, parents or guardians of students may help defray the field trip and excursion costs through voluntary donations. In no event will a student be prevented from participating in the field trip or excursion due to lack of sufficient funds. In accordance with Education Code section 35330(b), HRCCS will coordinate the efforts of community service groups (including parents or guardians of other students) to supply funds for students in need.

HRCCS complies with AB 1575. Complaints regarding noncompliance with AB 1575 may be filed with the Executive Director under the Uniform Complaint Procedures.

Voluntary Participation

The coordinating teacher will provide alternative educational activities to those students who choose not to attend a specific field trip or excursion. Parents will have advance notice of any upcoming field trip or excursion and have the option to withdraw their permission for their child to attend that field trip or excursion.