Foreign Field Trip Organizer’s Risk Management Guide

Before requesting approval for a Foreign Field Trip, please read the contents of this Guide:
This Guide is designed to assist foreign field Trip Organizers with considering, planning, managing, and participating in foreign field trips. The contents of this Guide provide suggestions and recommendations relative to foreign field trips and are intended to minimize risk exposures.

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SECTION 1
Foreign Field Trip Considerations for Sponsoring Schools, Departments, and Trip Organizers

OVERVIEW:

1. **Foreign Field Trip Defined**: Any travel outside the contiguous states in conjunction with instruction on the high school level. Foreign trips will be considered a school sponsored activity with all rules and standards for student conduct applicable.

2. **Where to Travel**: Tours may be planned to any country or state outside the contiguous states. Travel destinations under a U.S. State Department “Travel Warning” should not be considered.

3. **Who May Travel**: All and only Loudoun County high school students are eligible for foreign field trips, except those who have graduated. Each student’s principal has the authority to deny eligibility on the basis of the student’s school conduct record. Foreign trips shall not be required or mandatory for students. The Trip Organizer may solicit student participants from other high schools with the knowledge and permission of all principals involved.

4. **Funding for the Travel**: No School Board or school funds will be committed to underwrite a trip or to reimburse individuals for financial loss due to trip modification/cancellation or for loss of money or possessions during the trip.

5. **Trip Activities**:Exclude any high risk activities such as skydiving, scuba diving, white-water rafting, kayaking, technical rock climbing, parasailing, bungee jumping, etc. while on foreign field trips. High risk activities that have been known to result in severe permanent injury, disability, or death are prohibited.

6. **Student Supervision**: A minimum ratio of one adult per eight (8) students is required according to LCPS Foreign Travel Regulations. Each trip will be properly supervised and chaperoned by teachers and parents. All chaperones must be approved by the school principals whose students are involved in the trip and by the Trip Organizer. An appropriate “What to do in Case of Emergency” outline (containing the Trip Organizer’s contact information/cell phone number) should be provided to each trip participant to carry with them at all times during the trip.

7. **Risk Communication**: Designated Field Trip Organizers have a responsibility to know as much as is reasonably possible about the trip conditions and service vendors and to inform students, parents, and other adult participants of any risks, in advance, so that they are able to make an informed decision as to whether or not they wish to participate. The Trip Organizer should conduct a foreign travel risk assessment that focuses on safety of the premises and activities, supervision, and security issues.

Meetings with prospective participants should be held to convey details of the trip concerning dates, travel logistics, educational benefits, risks/activities, modes of travel, accommodations, supervision, finances, paperwork, and any other items the participants deem appropriate.

8. **Trip Approval Process**: The Trip Organizer must inform their principal of the desire to organize a foreign field trip and obtain the principal’s permission to proceed with advertising and soliciting trip participants during the school day. Central office instructional staff members will inform their immediate supervisors. The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction must approve all foreign trips. See Section 3 for detailed information on the Trip Approval Process.
9. **Trip Security - U.S. State Department Website & Registering the Foreign Field Trip:** The Trip Organizer and sponsoring school/department should provide administrators, staff, volunteers, students and other participants with the latest and most accurate information about security for the proposed travel. The U.S. State Department website [http://travel.state.gov/travel/](http://travel.state.gov/travel/) contains the most up-to-date information on travel warnings, security concerns, individual country profiles, and the political climate for every country in the world. This site also provides contact information for local American Consulates in each country.

The Trip Organizer should register at [https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/](https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/), (this is a free service). This enables the U.S. State Department to properly assist you in the case of an emergency; the State Department will contact travelers if there is a family emergency in the U.S., or if a crisis or state of emergency occurs in the country to which you are traveling. In accordance with the US Privacy Act, information about the welfare of travelers and their whereabouts will not be released to others unless they have expressed authorization to receive such information.

10. **Travel Documents & U.S. Customs Information:** The U.S. State Department website contains information and downloadable forms for ordering passports: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/](http://travel.state.gov/passport/). The “Travel Warnings” section of this website [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html) also contains visa requirements and where to obtain them.

A valid U.S. Passport is required to enter and leave most foreign countries. All persons traveling by air from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda, must have a valid passport to re-enter the U.S. This is true even if the foreign country visited does not require a passport for entry. Since it can take several weeks to obtain a passport, trip participants are urged to apply for them several months in advance of the trip.

11. **Immunizations & Other Health Concerns:** The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) website—[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)—contains immunization requirements and information about travel hazards for all areas of the world. The Loudoun County Health Department or an individual’s primary healthcare provider may also offer pre-travel counseling, health advice, and/or immunizations. It is advisable that students, employees, and other adult participants consult with their healthcare provider prior to any foreign travel.

12. **Foreign Field Trip Travel Insurance is Recommended:**

LCPS does not provide accident, medical or travel insurance for students and other participants of foreign field trips. Optional foreign field trip travel insurance may be purchased by individual students and adult participants, or the sponsoring School/Department, and is strongly recommended.

Travel Insurance coverage protects travelers against unexpected events such as Trip Cancellation Expenses, Trip Interruption, Travel Delay, Baggage and Personal Effects, Baggage Delay, Medical or Dental Expenses, Emergency Assistance, and Emergency Medical Transportation.

Schools/Departments cannot require students to purchase this insurance as a prerequisite for participation in an educational activity. You can, however, recommend the coverage and provide information about it in materials relating to the foreign field trip. Your School/Department may also wish to consider purchasing a Group Travel Insurance Plan on behalf of all participants in the foreign field trip.

13. **Travel and Transportation during the Foreign Field Trip:** LCPS does not recommend non-commercial or privately owned aircraft, watercraft/boats, or other modes of transportation while on foreign field trips. Foreign field trip participants should use commercial carriers or public transportation whenever possible.
14. **Participants with Disabilities:** Employees, volunteers, and students with disabilities may request special accommodations for foreign field trips. Trip Organizers may contact the following LCPS resources for more information:

- For questions involving students and volunteers please contact the LCPS Office of Diagnostic and Prevention Services at 571-252-1013.
- For questions involving employees, please contact the LCPS Employee Benefits Division at 571-252-1240.

15. **First Aid:** It is advisable for at least one adult participant (preferably an LCPS staff member) to have basic first aid certification. Additionally, the Trip Organizer should request that the travel organization provide the location of medical facilities for the location/s in which you will be traveling. Upon arrival to your destination it is recommended that you be aware of and identify the urgent care medical facilities and emergency authorities in your travel area.

16. **Medication for Student Participants:** For Foreign Field Trips, additional physician’s orders and parental permission may be required for student participants to self-administer medications. Please contact your School Nurse for guidance and to make certain the required paperwork is completed a minimum of 30 days in advance of the foreign field trip. (See **SECTION 6: FOREIGN FIELD TRIP FORMS**: EXHIBIT E-LCPS AUTHORIZATION FOR MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION)
SECTION 2
Selection of Foreign Travel Vendors and Contracts/Agreements

1. **LCPS Purchasing and LCPS Risk Management** staff are available to assist with reviewing vendor contractual language and requesting liability insurance certificates.

2. **Contracts and Agreements**: Contracts and agreements determine what liabilities/responsibilities LCPS and the other party agree to assume. Schools/Departments may not negotiate or sign indemnification agreements to obligate LCPS for liabilities that are not covered by the Schools’ insurance program.

LCPS will not agree to the following contractual provisions and will request removal from the vendor’s contract:
   a. Hold Harmless, Indemnification, Waiver or Limitation of Liability, Assumption of Risk, etc.
   b. Additional fees/charges based on Audits following the delivery of services
   c. Payment of the other party’s Attorneys fees
   d. Personal Guarantee by the Signer of the Contract
   e. Binding Arbitration
   f. Legal Jurisdictions other than the Commonwealth of Virginia

3. **Use of Travel Agents and Educational Travel/Tour Firms**: Foreign field trip travel arrangements, transportation, accommodations, excursions/tours/events, finances, security, and overall trip planning is best handled by a commercial travel firm specializing in educational travel. The travel firms require individual trip participants to complete trip registration forms and sign contracts accepting the firm’s terms and conditions for providing travel services.

Utilizing professional travel agents and educational travel/tour firm services to handle travel plans may be more expensive than the Trip Organizer performing all the travel arrangements. However, the use of an educational travel professional provides an additional layer of liability protection for LCPS and for the Trip Organizer and participants.

4. **Annual LCPS Vendor Requirements for Travel Agents and Educational Travel/Tour Firms**

The following documents are required for all LCPS Vendors providing services on behalf of the school system. These documents need to be updated at the beginning of each school year or upon expiration and will allow vendors to contract with any school in the system desiring to utilize their services. The Trip Organizer shall send the following documents (found in the Exhibit Section at the end of this Guide) to their travel agent or educational travel firm for processing:

- LCPS Contractors Certification Form (**Exhibit G**)
- LCPS Virginia Mandatory Contract Provisions (**Exhibit H**)
- LCPS Certificate of Liability Insurance Request (**Exhibit I**)
- IRS W-9 Tax Payer Identification & Certification Form (**Exhibit J**)
SECTION 3
Foreign Field Trip Approval Process Steps

1. Please refer to School Board Policy and Regulation §5-12 governing foreign field trips (See EXHIBIT A).

2. The LCPS Foreign Field Trip Request & Checklist (See EXHIBIT B) is available electronically on the LCPS Intranet and can be downloaded and saved to your computer. The request form shall be completed by the Trip Organizer by placing the cursor in the gray boxes and entering the information required. Save the document, and print the final version for signatures.

3. At least three (3) months in advance of the trip send the completed LCPS Foreign Field Trip Request & Checklist paper document with original signatures to the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Administration Building. The request form should be sent before making any final commitment to a travel agency, foreign exchange program, airline, etc.

4. After receiving approval from the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction which confirms the instructional value of the trip and the assurance of adequate supervision, all documents will be forwarded to the Risk Management Office for an assessment of the risk factors involved with trip. Risk Management will review the trip documents and may request additional information. Comments, suggestions, and recommendations to the Trip Organizer and the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction will be provided based on the completed risk assessment. Contact Risk Management by calling 571-252-1280 if you have questions about the status of your Foreign Field Trip Request.

5. The signed LCPS Foreign Field Trip Request & Checklist will be returned to the school principal when the final trip approval is secured from the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction.
SECTION 4
Trip Participant Information

1. **Trip Information Meetings with Prospective Participants:** All details pertaining to the foreign field trip shall be provided during a parent/student meeting (or series of meetings) held by the Trip Organizer and shall include the following items:

   - Dates of the trip
   - Travel Logistics
   - Educational Benefits
   - Risks/Activities
   - Modes of Travel
   - Accommodations
   - Supervision of Students
   - Finances
   - Required Forms and Travel Documents
   - Other Topics deemed appropriate by Trip Participants

   A general inquiry of participant interest may be conducted to determine whether or not the trip planning should move forward.

2. **Participation Forms for Students and Adults to Complete (See EXHIBITS C, D & E):** The Trip Organizer shall collect a completed *LCPS Overnight & Foreign Field Trip—Student Participation and Permission Form* (EXHIBIT C) and if necessary the *LCPS Authorization for Medication Administration* (EXHIBIT E) form(s) from each student participant. The Trip Organizer shall also collect completed *LCPS Overnight & Foreign Field Trip—Adult Participation Form* (EXHIBIT D) from each adult participant.

   These forms are an effective tool for informing participants in advance and enable individuals to make an informed decision about the possible risks associated with the proposed trip. The form also provides for each participant’s consent and emergency information and includes the Trip Organizer’s contact information. Participation Forms contain personal information and are to be maintained and safeguarded by the Trip Organizer at all times during the trip.

3. **Information to Provide to LCPS Dispatch Prior to Trip Departure:** The Trip Organizer will email a single document .pdf scan of the collection of the Student and Adult Participation Forms, along with the finalized trip itinerary and the trip sponsor’s cell phone or other contact number, to the Dispatch Office at LCPSdispatch@lcps.org no more than three (3) days prior to trip departure date.
SECTION 5
Liability Involved with Foreign Field Trips

1. **LCPS Liability Insurance**: There are times in which LCPS employees, volunteers, or students who are participating in foreign field trips may cause injury to others or damage to property.
   
a. **Student Liability**: LCPS Liability Insurance does not provide coverage for students. Damages to others caused by students are the responsibility of the student and their parent/guardian.
   
b. **Employees and Volunteers**: The LCPS liability insurance program may cover negligent acts by LCPS provided that employees and volunteers are:
      1) participating in programs sponsored by LCPS;
      2) acting within the course and scope of LCPS assigned duties; and
      3) acting in good faith.

   Legal suits must be brought in the United States for LCPS liability insurance coverage to be applicable.

   LCPS Liability Insurance Coverage does not cover employees and volunteers if they are:
   1) not acting within the course and scope of their duties;
   2) under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substances;
   3) willfully violating laws or LCPS policy, or commit an act that was intentional, reckless or malicious in nature.

2. **Liability Claims made by Others Against LCPS**: If a Trip Organizer is contacted by another party about a claim arising as a result of participation in a foreign field trip, immediately contact the LCPS Risk Management Office at 571-252-1280. Do not admit to liability, regardless of the circumstances, as this could prejudice LCPS’ ability to appropriately manage the claim.

3. **Injuries and Losses to LCPS Trip Participants Caused by Others**: If others cause harm or damage to LCPS employees, volunteers, students, and/or property during a foreign field trip, it is important to take care of emergency needs first and foremost (i.e., medical care, repairs, etc.) and address claims against the other party later. Documentation of the circumstances is to be made using the LCPS Incident/Injury Report Form (See EXHIBIT F).

   Call the LCPS Risk Management Office at 571-252-1280 as soon as possible to check on applicable insurance coverage and documentation that may be required. Remember that LCPS employees, volunteers, and students may have individual causes of action against third parties who cause them harm. It is recommended that trip participants not sign any releases and/or agreements without first seeking legal advice.
### SECTION 6
**Foreign Field Trip Forms**

Below is a list of the various forms required for a Foreign Field Trip. Simply click on the title of each Exhibit to download or print the document. See the following pages of this Guide for examples of EXHIBITS A-J.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXHIBIT</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td><strong>LCPS School Board Policy and Regulations Section 5-12, Foreign Trips</strong>—Trip Organizers should review these documents prior to making a request for a Foreign Field Trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td><strong>LCPS Foreign Field Trip Request &amp; Checklist</strong>—Trip Organizers will complete this form, provide the requested attachments, and submit all documents to their Principal or Department Supervisor for approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td><strong>LCPS Overnight &amp; Foreign Field Trip—Student Participation and Permission Form</strong>—The Student Participation Forms contain personal information and are to be maintained and safeguarded by the Trip Organizer at all times during the trip. The Trip Organizer will email a single document .pdf scan of the collection of Student Participation Forms, along with the finalized trip itinerary and the trip sponsor’s cell phone or other contact number, to the Dispatch Office at <a href="mailto:LCPSDispatch@lcps.org">LCPSDispatch@lcps.org</a> no more than three (3) days prior to trip departure date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td><strong>LCPS Overnight &amp; Foreign Field Trip—Adult Participation Form</strong>—The Participation Forms contain personal information and are to be maintained and safeguarded by the Trip Organizer at all times during the trip. The Trip Organizer will email a single document .pdf scan of the collection of Adult Participation Forms, along with the finalized trip itinerary and the trip sponsor’s cell phone or other contact number, to the Dispatch Office at <a href="mailto:LCPSDispatch@lcps.org">LCPSDispatch@lcps.org</a> no more than three (3) days prior to trip departure date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td><strong>LCPS Authorization for Medication Administration</strong>—This is a Student Health Services form that must be completed for those Student Participants requiring medication administration during the foreign field trip. Completed forms shall be submitted to the School Nurse for processing a minimum of 30 days prior to the trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td><strong>LCPS Incident/Injury Report Form</strong>—This form should be used by the Trip Organizer to document incidents and injuries that may occur while on the foreign field trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G</strong></td>
<td><strong>LCPS Contractor Certification Form</strong>—This form shall be sent to the Educational Travel/Tour Firm for completion if the firm will be providing travel/tour guide services and interaction with LCPS students during the trip. The completed form should be returned to LCPS Purchasing Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H</strong></td>
<td><strong>LCPS Mandatory Contract Provisions Form</strong>—This form shall be sent to the Educational Travel/Tour Firm for completion and returned to LCPS Purchasing Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td><strong>LCPS Certificate of Insurance Request</strong>—This document shall be sent to the Educational Travel/Tour Firm for processing. Certificates of Insurance shall be returned to the LCPS Risk Management Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J</strong></td>
<td><strong>IRS W-9 Request for Tax Payer Identification Number and Certification Form</strong>—This document shall be sent to the Educational Travel/Tour Firm for completion and returned to LCPS Risk Management. The form is necessary only for vendors new to LCPS or if a current vendor’s business information has changed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>