Field Trips Head Start

POLICY / APPROACH:

Field trips are pre-planned and documented in the lesson plan; they are relevant to the curriculum and reflective of the needs, interests and cultures of the children and families. Field trips connect children and their families to their community.

HEAD START PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

1302.31 Teaching and learning environment  
1302.47 Safety Practices  
1303.73 Transportation Trip Routing  
1303.74 Transportation Safety Procedures  
ACF-IM-HS-14-04 Bus and transportation safety

PROCEDURES:

Planning and Curriculum

- Consideration should be given to the skill level and makeup of the class when beginning the process of planning a field trip. Teachers will gather information from families and children about interests to help plan destinations. Field trips should be noted on the classroom monthly calendar.
- Follow the guidelines set by your Site Manager around field trips, including completion and submission of the field trip request form 30 days in advance of the trip. Field Trip plans must be approved by the Site Manager and Education Supervisor before submitting them to the Education Manager for secondary approval and scheduling.
  1. Once a plan is approved, the teacher will fill out the Field Trip Request form on the Staff Zone website. After submitting the form, it will automatically be emailed to the Education Manager for approval.
  2. If approved, the Education Manager will email to Operations to put into transportation calendar.
To request funds: After the trip is approved by the Site Manager and the Education Department, the Education Manager will connect with Education Director with the name and description of the trip, total cost, and the name and address of location. If approved, the education department will complete a check request form. The fiscal department will notify the center contact person when the check is available for pick up. (A check that is requested by a Monday will usually be available Friday of that same week.)

3. Walking Field Trips: After receiving approval from the Site Manager and Education Supervisor, The Teacher will fill out Field Trip Request located on the Staff Zone Website. The form will automatically be emailed to the Education Manager and the Site Manager. The Teacher is responsible for notifying Parents/Guardians.

- Field trip content, including bus travel activities, must be documented on the lesson plan. Related activities before and after the trip are noted on the lesson plan to prepare children and assess outcomes. Field trips will be included on the classroom monthly calendar.
- Teachers will plan for individualization for focal children when a field trip is planned. This will be reflected on the Individual Learning Plan.
- Children will have had a bus evacuation drill prior to the field trip or will notify Transportation that the children will need a drill.
- Staff will complete safety pre-planning prior to a field trip, such as going to the site to ensure safety of the children and appropriateness of the activity and limiting travel time on the bus.
- Rules of Field Trips are related to our three universal rules. They will be taught and referred to by Teachers and children prior to and throughout the duration of the field trip. Teachers and the Education Supervisor must feel confident that the children have had sufficient preparation, are clear about expectations, and are ready to take a trip.
- Field trips involving Animals and Pets, please refer to Animals and Pets Policy and Procedure.
- Family members, volunteers and staff need to be informed. Please refer to the health policies and procedures: First Aid Kits-Health Nutrition and Food Service.
- A staff person will always accompany children into the restroom during the field trip. Even if the parent is present. Volunteers will not be left alone with children.
- Families will be notified immediately following the Field Trip plan approval and scheduling. Notification will be in written form, and may be a flier or monthly calendar. Notification will include the date, time or center departure and return, location, and purpose of the trip. Families are encouraged to attend field trips.
- Teachers will post a note on the Destination Log, classroom and center doors as to their whereabouts and the estimated time they will arrive back at the center.

Transportation

- The Education Manager will email Business Services Manager with the Field Trip form attached to request scheduling the bus.
• Teachers will be responsible for planning and ensuring that children who require medications will be accommodated. Bus drivers will check with teachers before departing on the field trip to ensure necessary medications are on the bus.

• For siblings to be transported on the bus, there must be room on the bus, and the weight of the child must be determined prior to the field trip, so it can be arranged to have the proper safety restraint or car seat available. Only Head Start car seats and safety restraints can be used when transporting children.

• Children will wear nametags.

• Complete the Classroom Field Trip Form upon loading children at the center and upon loading children at the Field Trip location before departure.

• The bus driver will notify the Main Office via bus radio when leaving the center and upon return to the center.

**Nutrition**

• Teacher will fill out the Kitchen field trip request and submit to the kitchen staff at least 2 weeks prior to the field trip date.

• Requests for food to take on a field trip needs to be submitted via email (from the cook) to the Food Service Manager 2 weeks in advance.

• Education staff and Food Service staff will plan appropriate field trip menus that meet CACFP guidelines. This includes any time there is a request for food to be taken away from the center. It will then be submitted to CACFP for approval, and the Food Service Manager will email the approval when received to the appropriate staff.

• All staff will follow safe sanitation practices.