

Seattle Public Schools Guidelines for Volunteer Chaperones International Field Trips

Thank You for Your Support!

Seattle Public Schools believes that field trips provide a valuable educational experience for students. Without the help of volunteer chaperones like you, many field trips would not be possible. We thank you very much for giving your time and support to these important activities.

In order to help ensure that District-sponsored field trips result in safe and rewarding experiences for all participants, we have prepared these guidelines to provide information about volunteering as a field trip chaperone.

Becoming a Volunteer Field Trip Chaperone

Because student safety is our paramount concern, Seattle Public Schools has established procedures for screening all school volunteers who may have unsupervised access to children. Please check the District website "Volunteering at SPS" (under the Families & Communities tab) for the latest requirements. No volunteer may chaperone a field trip until the background check and other requirements are completed. If you have recently moved to Washington State and plan to chaperone an overnight field trip, the District may require you to be fingerprinted so we may access other states' criminal history databases. Please allow sufficient time to complete this requirement before the scheduled field trip departure date.

The District also requires that volunteer chaperones be at least 21 years old to supervise students in grades 6-8, 25 years old for students in grades 9-12.

Guidelines for Volunteer Chaperones

Prior to your field trip, the lead chaperone will meet with you and other chaperones to share information regarding the activities planned for the trip, expectations for supervising students, and emergency procedures. In addition, we have developed the following general guidelines to help you perform your duties as a chaperone. If you have any questions regarding these guidelines, please contact the lead chaperone or the building principal/program manager.

1. All school rules apply on District-sponsored events. Chaperones are expected to comply with District policies, follow the directions given by the District's lead chaperone, work cooperatively with other staff and volunteers, and model appropriate behaviors for students. Be sure you are familiar with the Seattle Public Schools' *Code of Conduct*.
2. In order to comply with District policy, during District sponsored events, chaperones:
 - may not use, sell, provide, possess, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
 - may not use tobacco in the presence of, or within the sight of, students
 - may not possess any weapon
 - may not administer any medications, prescription or nonprescription, to students

Local laws in many countries differ from those in Seattle when it comes to alcohol, drugs and firearms. Regardless of whether local laws would permit it, students and chaperones are not to engage in any of the above activities at any time during the trip.

3. Student behavior is your responsibility. School rules related to student behavior apply. Go over rules and standards of behavior, safety rules, and any site specific rules with students. Ensure that students do not get involved in any extra activities not pre-approved by administrators and parents. If a student will not follow your reasonable requests to comply with behavior and safety rules, please notify the lead chaperone or other District staff chaperone promptly.

