

FAQs Regarding School Trips

1. What Regulation governs school trips?

Chancellor's Regulation A-670 (hereinafter CR A-670) sets forth the rules and procedures governing all school trips, including international trips. The regulation provides guidance for planning and executing field trips for students, and outlines the responsibilities of superintendents, principals and staff. It also establishes required supervisory ratios and protocols for handling emergencies. Please refer to the full text of [Chancellor's Regulation A-670](#).

2. What is the purpose of a school trip?

School trips should have an educational purpose and support learning outcomes. A trip that is celebratory in nature (e.g., senior class trip) should only be approved if the students fundraise to participate in the trip. Fundraisers for such purposes should be limited to once a year. Trips should not be cost-prohibitive and should aim to include as many students as possible. Trips are an extension of the curriculum and their purpose is for students to engage in an educational experience with their peers. Trips should not be approved if there are not a sufficient number of students interested in the school trip (e.g., a school trip where less than half the students in class are scheduled to participate generally is not acceptable). In determining whether a sufficient number of students are interested in the trip, the number of students participating from multiple schools may be considered. Schools should ensure that there is a planned educational experience consistent with the learning goals of the trip for students who are unable to take part in the trip.

3. What is considered a DOE-sponsored school trip?

School trips organized by special programs within the school (e.g., clubs), trips that are planned by the school or school staff, and trips that will include school staff are DOE-sponsored school trips and therefore must comply with CR A-670. When a trip is sponsored by a parent association or an outside group such as a community-based organization that has a relationship to the school, the principal should consult with his or her Senior Field Counsel <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/GeneralCounsel/Legal/SFC/default.htm> to determine whether the trip is a DOE trip or whether it is an independently run trip. For example, if a community-based organization that works with the school during the day or after school is organizing a trip, the principal should look at the following factors in determining whether the trip is a DOE-sponsored trip: (a) the purpose of the trip and whether it supports the curriculum/purpose of the school or is simply a travel opportunity; (b) what involvement the DOE has in planning the trip; and (c) whether any DOE staff members are chaperoning the trip. If it is determined that the trip is not a DOE trip and is an independently run trip, parents must be advised in writing that the DOE is not sponsoring the trip, and therefore is not responsible and will not be providing supervision.

4. What are the Conflicts of Interest Rules for DOE-sponsored school trips?

All DOE personnel involved in a DOE trip co-sponsored by a non-governmental entity, such as a community-based organization, a tour company, or other organization that is offering to pay for their travel and/or lodging, must complete the [“Travel Related Expenses Paid for by Non-Government Entities” form](#). Principals must sign the form for each school staff member who is participating in the trip and superintendents must sign the form for principals who are participating in the trip. An agenda must be attached to the form and then the employee(s) attending the trip must send the form to the DOE Ethics Officer for review. The form should be submitted as far in advance as possible, but at minimum, 3 weeks before the trip. Before attending the trip, all DOE personnel must receive approval from the DOE Ethics Officer in addition to completing all other forms that are required for travel. If approved by the DOE Ethics Officer, accepting travel and lodging in these circumstances is permissible. Any other offers of stipends or other payments cannot be accepted.

5. What are the Conflicts of Interest Rules for trips that are independently run and not sponsored by DOE?

For independently run trips not sponsored by DOE, offers to pay for travel and/or lodging, or any offers of stipends or other payments, are considered either compensation and/or a gift to the employee, and therefore cannot be accepted. The DOE may be able to apply for a conflict of interest waiver in very limited circumstances. Please contact the DOE Ethics Officer for further guidance.

6. How many chaperones do you need on a school trip and who may serve as a chaperone?

All school trips require appropriate supervision as set forth in CR A-670. Principals must designate a licensed teacher, assistant principal, or other supervisor participating in the trip as the individual with overall responsibility for the trip. There must be supervision of students at every stage of a school trip.

Principals must ensure that the ratio of staff and adults to students on a school trip is appropriate given the type of trip, the age of the students, and the type of activities in which the students will engage. The following chart sets forth the minimum number of staff required. Please note that the staff/adults-to-student ratios are based on groups of up to 30 students for domestic trips and up to 15 students for international trips. The number of staff/adults reflects the required minimum number, and applies regardless of how many students actually participate in the trip. For example, the regulation requires that one staff member and two adults are required for an elementary school day trip within New York City for up to 30 students, and one additional adult is required for each additional ten students. If the trip only has 20 students participating, one staff member and two adults are still required. Moreover, if 33 students participate, an additional adult is still required.

Type of Trip	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
Routine Day Trips within NYC	1 staff member + 2 additional adults for up to 30 students For each additional 1-10 students, an additional adult is required.	1 staff member + 2 additional adults for up to 30 students For each additional 1-15 students, an additional adult is required.	1 staff member + 1 additional adult for up to 30 students For each additional 1-15 students, an additional adult is required.
One day out-of-the-city or overnight trips	2 staff members + 1 adult for up to 30 students. For each additional 1-10 students, an additional adult is required.	2 staff members + 1 adult for up to 30 students For each additional 1-15 students, an additional adult is required.	2 staff members + 1 adult for up to 30 students. For each additional 1-15 students, an additional adult is required.
International Trips		2 staff members + 1 other adult are required for up to 15 students. For each additional 1-10 students, an additional adult is required.	2 staff members + 1 other adult are required for up to 15 students. For each additional 1-10 students, an additional adult is required.

All schools trips must have at least one teacher or supervisor present on the trip. If a trip requires a second staff member, that staff member may be a member of the instructional staff, a paraprofessional, a school aide, a guidance counselor, or a parent coordinator. The other chaperones on the trip must be staff members or parents of students attending the trip.

The term “parent” means the student’s parent, guardian, or any person in a parental or custodial relationship to the student.

The term parent does not include adults who are not in a custodial relationship with the student. For example, a parent’s friend or boyfriend, or a parent’s adult child may not serve as a chaperone.

If a trip involves swimming, additional requirements apply. Please refer to question 15 below for more information.

7. Who may come on a school trip?

As described above in question 6, parents and appropriate school staff may attend a school trip as chaperones. It is a violation of CR A-670 for any relative of a DOE employee to participate in a school trip, either as a chaperone or as an attendee. Thus, a staff member may not bring his or her spouse or boyfriend/girlfriend, other family members, or a child on the school trip. It is also a violation of CR A-670 for a parent to bring other siblings or family members on a school trip, even if the sibling is an adult. School trips are only for students and staff members/parents who are acting as chaperones. (See Question 6 for definition of parent for such purposes)

Allowing relatives of DOE personnel to participate in a school trip may also violate the New York City Conflicts of Interest Law and the conflicts of interest provisions in Chancellor's Regulation C-110. City employees cannot use their city position to benefit themselves or family members. Therefore, as these school trips are often offered at a discounted rate for adults and/or are not otherwise available to the general public, it is also a potential conflict for a DOE employee to include a family member on the trip. If the spouse or family member is also a staff member from the same school, the school must contact the DOE Ethics Officer for further guidance. Possible violations will be reported to the Special Commissioner of Investigations for their review.

8. When can payment be made or tickets purchased?

All school trips must be approved in advance by the principal before payment may be made or tickets are purchased. For international trips, the school also must obtain preliminary approval from the superintendent before payment may be made or tickets purchased. Trip organizers may not purchase tickets or move ahead with scheduling the trip until they have received approval from the principal, or in the case of international trips, approval from the principal and superintendent. No school should enter into an agreement with a tour company or make any payments for travel until the trip has received the requisite approval. Parents must be informed in writing about cancellation/refund policies for tickets and other travel-related expenses. Notwithstanding such policies, schools should make every effort to help students who are unable to go on a trip obtain reimbursement. Schools may seek the assistance of senior field counsel. With respect to procuring travel arrangements, schools must follow [Division of Financial Operations Standard Operating Procedures](#).

9. What steps should a school follow when a student needs nursing services, the administration of medication, special transportation or another accommodation during a school trip?

Schools must meet the needs of all students who require medication, special transportation, or other accommodations on a school trip due to a disability as set forth in an IEP, 504 Plan and/or a DMAF/MAF (See [School Health Forms](#).)

If a student's IEP, 504 Plan, or DMAF/MAF provides for the provision of nursing services, the administration of medication, special transportation, or other accommodations, schools must take appropriate steps to ensure such accommodations are provided during the school trip.

- Requests for a trip nurse should be made to the Office of School Health (OSH). The principal/designee should coordinate with the parent and nurse to make sure all medications and supplies are provided to the trip nurse. Detailed information on the steps that a school must follow to make sure students' medication needs are met is available at [Clarification of Trip Nurse Policy for Students Requiring Administration of Medication](#).
- Requests for special transportation for school trips should be made to the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT).
- If a student's needs cannot be met, then the trip must be cancelled or postponed until such time as the student's needs can be met. With respect to students who require a trip nurse, the school may ask the parent to attend or alternatively designate an adult who can come on the trip to administer the medication or provide the accommodation as set forth in the [Clarification of Trip Nurse Policy for Students Requiring Administration of Medication](#).

However, schools cannot require or pressure a parent to attend the trip or designate another adult on account of the student's needs.

In the event that the trip has to be cancelled or postponed, the school cannot inform other parents of the reason for the cancellation or postponement of the trip.

10. **What information must a trip organizer submit to a principal when proposing a DOE school trip that takes place in the United States?**

I. Preliminary Domestic Trip Proposal

- A. The trip organizer must submit a **preliminary trip proposal** to the principal which:
1. Describes in detail the purpose of the trip (i.e., how the trip is related to the students' curriculum, whether the trip is a celebratory trip, or whether the trip is sponsored by a club or group within the school);
 2. Indicates how many students are in the participating grade/program and how many students are anticipated to participate in the trip; and
 3. Indicates the number of chaperones who will attend the trip.
- B. The trip proposal must be submitted well in advance of the trip. It is recommended that the proposal be submitted no later than 60 days prior to the date of the trip.
- C. Principals must determine whether the proposed trip meets the guidelines for a DOE-sponsored school trip within 15 days of receipt of proposal. (e.g., will the trip include the correct number of chaperones to students and is the trip educational). Principals should check to see whether the trip will be organized by an outside entity and whether

that entity is reputable and if the trip is co-sponsored by a non-governmental entity, and whether there are there any conflict of interest concerns. Principals should determine how many students are anticipated to participate and whether the trip is cost-prohibitive. If after reviewing all the information, the principal determines that the trip should go forward, the principal must notify the trip organizer. It is recommended that such notification occur within 15 days of receipt of the proposal.

II. Domestic Trip Planning

- A. Once the trip organizer obtains approval from the principal, he/she may then proceed with planning the trip.
- B. The trip organizer must provide all parents with the parent consent form. Schools must use the consent forms attached to [CR A-670](#). Senior field counsel are available to help with revising the consent form if the individual circumstances of the trip require that the form be modified.
- C. The trip organizer must determine whether any of the participating students require nursing services, the administration of medication, special transportation or other accommodations, as set forth in an IEP, 504 Plan and/or DMAF/MAF. Parents must be provided with the MAF/DMAF forms packet in order to identify medication and possible nursing needs (See [School Health Forms](#); [Clarification of Trip Nurse Policy for Students Requiring Administration of Medication](#).)
- D. The trip organizer must obtain signed declarations from all chaperones (including parents) indicating that they have read and are familiar with CR A-670 and that they will follow all school rules and Chancellor's Regulations while on the trip, including no alcohol consumption (See [DOE Chaperone Declaration](#); [Non-DOE Chaperone Declaration](#).)

III. Final Approval of Domestic Trip from Principal

- A. The trip organizer must submit a **Trip Plan** (See Attachment 1 to [Chancellor's Regulation A-670](#)) together with the signed consent and declaration forms to the principal for final approval no later than 30 days prior to date of trip. The Trip Plan must include all pertinent information about the trip including the purpose of the trip, number of chaperones, number of students, whether there are any students requiring, nursing services, the administration of medication, special transportation or other accommodations as set forth in an IEP, 504 Plan and/or DMAF/MAF and how their needs will be met and details about location, lodging, transportation and insurance.
- B. The principal must review the plan to determine whether there will be adequate supervision on the trip and whether proper transportation will be used to and from the trip within 15 days of receipt of Trip Plan. The trip organizer and principal must also ensure that all parents sign the parent consent form and that students sign the student's

declaration section of that form. Furthermore, the trip organizer and principal must ensure that all chaperones sign declarations as set forth above. In addition, the principal and the trip organizer must ensure that if students require nursing services, the administration of medication, special transportation or other accommodations on the trip, all required documentation has been submitted. If all the requirements have been met and the principal determines that it is appropriate to go forward, the principal will give his/her final approval and sign the Trip Plan.

Domestic Trip Planning

	Trip Organizer	Principal
Preliminary Trip Approval	Submit preliminary trip proposal to principal for review and preliminary approval no later than 60 days prior to date of trip.	Review preliminary trip proposal and notify trip organizer if proposal is approved and trip planning may go forward within 15 days of receipt of trip proposal.
Final Approval	Submit Trip Plan to principal for final approval no later than 30 days prior to date of trip.	Review Trip Plan and provide final approval and sign Trip Plan within 15 days of receipt of Trip Plan .

11. **What information must a trip organizer submit to the principal and superintendent when proposing an international trip?**

There are several steps and levels of approval that trip organizers must follow and obtain when proposing an international trip. Trip organizers may not move ahead with planning the trip until the principal and superintendent have provided preliminary approval as set forth below. Schools are encouraged to contact their FSC Director of Operations for guidance and support when proposing and planning an international trip.

I. Preliminary International Trip Proposal:

As is the case with domestic trips, the international trip organizer must submit a **preliminary trip proposal** to the principal for review and approval no later than 90 days prior to date of trip. The trip proposal must contain: 1) a detailed trip itinerary; 2) prospective flight and hotel information; 3) a statement explaining the educational purpose of the trip; 4) the number of students who are likely to participate in the trip; 5) the number of chaperones who will be attending the trip; 6) the cost of the trip and any proposed fundraising plans associated with the trip; 7) visa requirements, if applicable; 8) information about any travel warnings and advisories if applicable; 9) information about required immunizations/vaccinations and other health related information; and 10) information about any students who may be participating in the trip who may be impacted by existing or proposed/impending travel restrictions.

II. Preliminary Principal Approval for International Trips:

- A. Principals must review the preliminary proposal to determine whether the international trip meets the requirements of CR A-670. Among the questions that should be asked and the factors to consider when reviewing the proposal are the following:
1. What is the purpose of the trip?
 2. What is the lodging and transportation plan? Is there homestay involved and how have the homestay families been vetted?
 3. Will the trip be cost-prohibitive and therefore likely not involve a large number of students?
 4. What is the proportion of school funds used relative to the number of students attending the trip and is it prudent?
 5. Is there a planned alternative educational experience that will ensure that students not attending the trip have access to the learning goals of this travel experience?
 6. Are there any students attending that require special accommodations?
 7. How many students are in the participating grade/program and how many are likely to attend the trip?
 8. Is there an outside entity involved in the trip? What role does it have and is it reputable? If the outside entity is a non-governmental entity, are there any conflict of interest concerns?
 9. How many chaperones will be accompanying the students? Who are the chaperones (e.g., parents, teachers, etc.) and what are their roles?
 10. Are there any travel advisories, alerts or notices in place regarding the destination country? If such advisories exist, principals should consult with their superintendents. (See www.travel.state.gov);
 11. Has the Center for Disease Control and Prevention or State Department indicated that immunizations/vaccinations are required or recommended in order to enter the countries being visited or are there any other relevant health or safety related information or precautions indicated on such websites? Principals should contact their FSC Health Director with any questions.
(See <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>;
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/iegps/travel-safety.html>)
 12. Are there any students participating in the trip or eligible for the trip who may be impacted by existing or proposed/impending travel restrictions?
- B. If after reviewing the preliminary proposal and the information set forth above, the principal determines that the international trip can take place, the principal must submit the trip proposal to the superintendent for approval at least 75 days prior to the date of the proposed trip.

III. Preliminary Superintendent Approval for International Trips:

- A. Superintendents must review the international trip proposal to determine whether the international trip meets the guidelines of CR A-670 and consider the questions and factors noted above.
- B. Senior Field Counsel/FSC Director of Operations are available to consult with the superintendent about the proposal.
- C. The superintendent will advise the principal/designee in writing if the school may go forward with planning the trip within 15 days of receipt of the trip proposal.

IV. International Trip Planning:

A. Planning

1. Once a school receives preliminary approval from the superintendent, the school may begin to plan the international trip and distribute information regarding the trip to students and parents.
2. The trip advisor must:
 - check for trip advisories and warnings on the U.S. State Department's website (See <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html>) and
 - check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website and the State Department website for any immunizations/vaccinations/medications that are recommended or required for travel to the countries where the students will be visiting and/or any health precautions that should be taken (e.g., regarding drinking of water, eating of foods, and use of insect repellent). (See <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>; <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/iegps/travel-safety.html>.)
3. For all international trips, parents must be advised in writing that:
 - they should refer to the U.S. State Department's website for travel advisories and warnings and that if the DOE at any point determines that a trip is inadvisable, it will be cancelled and the parents will be immediately notified;
 - they should speak with their physician and refer to the CDC and State Department websites for information regarding any immunizations/vaccinations/medications that are recommended or required, and/or any health or safety precautions that should be taken; and
 - if particular immunizations/vaccinations are required, they must provide proof of immunizations/vaccinations in order for their child to be permitted to travel.
4. The trip organizer must provide parents with the [Parent Health Advisory-Travel Advisory Letter](#) which notifies parents of the above. Schools must use this form letter.
5. The trip organizer must provide parents with the Parent Consent Form. Schools must use the consent forms attached to [CR A-670](#). Senior Field Counsel are available to help with revising the consent form for the trip if the individual circumstances of the trip require that the form be modified (e.g., if the trip involves a homestay).

6. The trip organizer must obtain signed declarations from all chaperones ([DOE Chaperone Declaration](#); [Non-DOE Chaperone Declaration](#)) (including parents) indicating that they have read and are familiar with CR A-670 and that they will follow all school rules and Chancellor's Regulations while on the trip including no alcohol consumption.
7. The trip organizer must determine whether any of the participating students require nursing services, the administration of medication, special transportation or other accommodations as set forth in [Clarification of Trip Nurse Policy for Students Requiring Administration of Medication](#). Parents must be provided with the MAF/DMAF forms packet in order to identify medication and possible nursing needs as set forth in this policy. (See link for further information- [School Health Forms](#).)

B. International Trip Plan

The trip organizer must complete the **trip plan** (See attachment 1 to [CR A-670](#)) and submit it to the principal together with the following information and documentation for review and final approval no later than 45 days prior to date of trip:

1. Information about each student participating in the trip and signed parental consent forms for each student permitting the student to participate in the trip. Students must also sign the student declaration section of the consent form.
2. Signed Parent Health Advisory/Travel Advisory letter from each parent. If immunizations/vaccinations are required, proof of such immunizations/vaccination for each student must be included. (In addition, all students participating in the trip must have the required immunizations for attending school or a valid medical or religious exemption.)
3. Information regarding whether there are any students requiring nursing services, the administration of medication, special transportation or other accommodations and how their needs will be met.
4. Trip itinerary, including all transportation details (e.g., prospective flight, train or bus information and hotel information, including phone numbers).
5. The number of chaperones and an explanation of who each chaperone is (i.e., a teacher, parent, staff member).
6. Copy of each traveler's passport and any necessary visas.¹
2. Insurance information including health insurance for each participant in accordance with CR A-670 (this must be international insurance valid in the countries students are visiting).
3. International phone numbers of chaperones (in case of emergency). Emergency contact sheet for all students and chaperones.
4. Signed declarations from all adult chaperones.
5. Letters to families explaining the purpose of the trip as well as information from parent meetings including sign-in sheets, agendas, and other materials/information distributed to parents.

¹ Principals must ensure that copies of any passports, visas or other immigration status documents are destroyed at the conclusion of the trip.

C. Principal Review of International Trip

1. Principals must review the trip plan and documentation to ensure it is complete and that the trip meets the guidelines of CR A-670.
2. Principals/designees must:
 - a. Confirm whether an appropriate number of students are anticipated to participate in the trip.
 - b. Confirm whether there is an appropriate number of chaperones. Refer to section above regarding chaperones to determine whether the criteria have been met. If there are not enough chaperones, immediate steps must be taken to find additional chaperones. The principal must ensure that at least one of the staff members accompanying the students on an international trip carries a phone with international service.
 - c. Check for trip advisories and warnings on the U.S. State Department's website (See <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html>)
 - d. Check all passports for students attending the trip to ensure that students' passports do not expire before the trip or during the trip. Check to see whether there are any specific requirements for the countries being visited regarding passport expiration date. <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html>
 - e. Check whether students need visas to enter the country, including whether non-U.S. citizen students need visas. If a student does not have the appropriate visa, the student cannot participate.²
 - f. Check to see if any students who may be participating in the trip will be affected by any existing or proposed/impending travel restrictions. Check for trip advisories and warnings on the U.S. State Department's website (See www.travel.state.gov).
 - g. Check the Center for Disease Control and State Department websites (See <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>; <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/iegps/travel-safety.html>) for any immunizations/vaccinations/medications that are recommended or required for travel to the countries where the students will be visiting and/or for any health precautions that should be taken (e.g., regarding drinking of water, eating of raw foods, and use of insect repellent.) and confirm that the trip organizer has or will review relevant health and safety precautions with students and parents prior to departure.
 - h. Confirm to make sure that parents have signed and returned the Parent Health Advisory/Travel Advisory Letter.
 - i. Confirm to make sure that parents have signed the required consent form.
 - j. Check to make sure that all chaperones have signed declarations.
 - k. Confirm that needs of students requiring nursing services, the administration of medication, special transportation or other accommodations will be met and that required documentation has been submitted.

² Some countries have more stringent rules that require that a passport not expire within 3 months of the time of travel. Check each country's website for further information.

3. If the principal determines that all of the requirements have been met and that it is appropriate to proceed with the trip, the principal must sign the **Trip Plan** and submit it and the documentation required in the plan and the completed [International Trip Checklist](#) to the superintendent for final approval at least 30 days prior to date of the trip. Schools are encouraged to review their materials and Checklist with their FSC Director of Operations.

D. Superintendent Review of International Trip

1. The superintendent must review the **Trip Plan** and the attached documentation described above within 15 days of receipt of the **Trip Plan**. If there are any travel advisories in effect, the superintendent should consult with the senior supervising superintendent.
2. If the superintendent determines that the requirements have been met and the trip is appropriate, he/she must provide final approval and sign the trip plan within 15 days of receipt of the trip plan, documentation and the International Trip Checklist.
3. No trip may proceed without such approval. If the superintendent has any questions regarding whether a trip should go forward, he/she should contact the senior supervising superintendent.

International Trip Planning

	International Trip Organizer	Principal	Superintendent
Preliminary International Trip Approval	Submit preliminary trip proposal to principal for review and approval no later than 90 days prior to date of trip.	Review and approve preliminary trip proposal and submit to superintendent for review and approval at least 75 days prior to date of proposed trip (within 15 days of receipt of trip proposal).	Review and approve preliminary trip proposal and advise principal in writing if preliminary trip proposal is approved at least 60 days prior to the date of proposed trip (within 15 days of receipt of trip proposal).
Final Approval	Complete Trip Plan and submit to principal for review and final approval no later than 45 days prior to proposed date of trip.	Review and approve Trip Plan , complete International Trip Checklist and submit both documents to superintendent for final approval at least 30 days prior to proposed date of trip (within 15 days of receipt of Trip Plan).	Provide final approval and sign the international Trip Plan no later than 15 days prior to proposed date of trip (within 15 days of receipt of Trip Plan).

12. What steps must be taken when a school requests approval for an international homestay?

While the requirements of CR A-670 do not apply to student exchange programs, they do apply to international trips that contain a homestay component. Accordingly, schools must follow the same procedures, comply with the same requirements, submit the same documentation and obtain the same approvals as are otherwise required for international trips. Schools must also comply with the additional requirements described below and homestay programs must be appropriately vetted.

Parents must be advised when a program will involve a homestay and must be advised that supervision of the students will be limited during times when their child is with the homestay family. Consent forms for such trips must be revised to reflect the circumstances of the homestay. Principals/superintendents must seek the assistance of Senior Field Counsel in revising the consent forms.

Homestay programs require the same number of chaperones as other DOE school trips. All chaperones must stay in the same city as the students who are participating in the homestay and chaperones should not travel outside of the local city or town where the students are located for the homestay, unless it is a group trip with all students involved. Chaperones must be available for all students who participate in the homestay program. The principal must ensure that at least one of the staff members accompanying students on an international trip carries a phone with international service. That staff member must distribute contact information to students and the homestay family prior to leaving for the homestay so that students will be able to easily contact him or her should there be a problem. Principals must advise chaperones on a homestay trip to check in frequently with all students.

As part of the preliminary trip proposal and in order to receive preliminary approval from the superintendent to move forward with the proposed trip, each principal must provide the superintendent a detailed explanation about how the relationship with the host school and/or host families have been vetted.

The final trip plan submitted to the superintendent must also include a list of host families, contact information for each host family, and names of students staying with the host family.

13. What if a school trip involves more than one school?

Schools may organize a trip that involves more than one school, and may combine chaperones from both schools to meet the ratios of appropriate chaperones to students per CR A-670. In such cases parents must be notified and there must be adequate supervision provided at all times.

14. What types of activities are permitted on school trips?

Where a trip involves activities with inherent risks (e.g., swimming, horseback riding, skiing, ice skating, use of physical fitness equipment), the principal/designee should consult with his/her FSC. Such activities should be age appropriate.

Consent forms must identify activities with inherent risks (e.g., swimming, horseback riding, ice skating, use of physical fitness equipment) that students will engage in on the trip. If medical pre-clearance is required for a student to take part in the trip and/or participate in certain activities, it must be obtained in advance of the trip.

The principal/designee must ensure that when students engage in activities with inherent risks (e.g., swimming, horseback riding, skiing, ice skating, use of physical fitness equipment), there is appropriate adult supervision while the student engages in the activity. If a school trip involves activities that require protective gear, students must wear such gear during these activities. For example, students who go horseback riding, skiing, or biking must wear helmets. Students who participate in water activities must wear a life jacket.

15. What if a school trip involves swimming?

Prior to approving a trip in which swimming will be involved, the principal/designee must ensure that a lifeguard will be on duty at all times students are permitted to swim. No swimming may be permitted unless there is a lifeguard on duty. Swimming and water-based activities also require specific levels of supervision as set forth below.

Ratio of staff to students for swimming and water-based activities:

- A. If students will be swimming or will participate in water-based activities (e.g., rowing, kayaking) the following ratios must be used:
 - 1. For elementary and middle school students, at least two (2) staff members and two (2) adults are required for up to thirty (30) students.
 - 2. For high school students, at least two (2) staff members and two (2) adults are required for up to thirty (30) students.
 - 3. With respect to the staff member(s) noted above, one **must be a teacher or supervisor**. The other staff member may be a member of the instructional staff (e.g., teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or a paraprofessional or school aide.
 - 4. The other two (2) adults noted above may be parent volunteers or members of the instructional staff (e.g., teacher, dean, guidance counselor, social worker) or paraprofessionals or school aides.
 - 5. At the elementary level, for each additional ten (10) students, two adults are required. At the middle and high school levels, for each additional fifteen (15) students, two additional adults are required.
- B. Students may only be permitted to swim when a lifeguard is on duty. The lifeguard must be on duty the entire time that students are swimming.

- C. Students who participate in water-based activities other than swimming such as kayaking, tubing or rowing must wear a lifejacket at all times.
- D. For international trips, the principal/designee must ensure that there is adult supervision appropriate to the activities in which the students engage.

16. What types of transportation may a school use?

Schools may use any of the following means of transportation:

- A. Public transit systems (e.g., subways, buses);
- B. Registered commercial airlines;
- C. Intercity buses or transit systems (e.g., Amtrak, Greyhound); and/or
- D. Private authorized buses, including school buses, as set forth below:
 - 1. Any vehicle utilized to transport students must comply with all federal, state, city, and Department of Education rules and regulations for the transport of students. This shall include, but is not limited to, standards established for vehicles, drivers, insurance, and companies.
 - 2. Schools must comply with established DOE procedures for obtaining private authorized buses. (See <http://www.optnyc.org/documents/CharteraCoachBus.htm> for detailed and up-to-date information about these procedures).
 - 3. Students may not be transported to or from the trip site on an unauthorized or private vehicle
 - 4. Appropriate transportation must be provided for any student with special transportation needs pursuant to an IEP or 504 plan.

17. When are yellow school buses mandated for domestic DOE school trips?

If public transportation is not being used, the use of yellow school buses is mandated for trips within New York State. If a particular leg of a school trip takes place in a location outside of New York State, then a yellow school bus is preferred, but not mandatory, especially if a yellow school bus is not readily available or would add substantially and unnecessarily to the cost of the trip.

For instance, if a school organizes a trip that involves flying to another city and the trip will include lodging at a national chain hotel that provides courtesy van/bus service to and from airports as part of the room rate package, then it is acceptable to use the courtesy van/bus for pupil transportation from the airport. However, the school must obtain written confirmation from the hotel that the driver has a valid vehicle operator's driver's license. If the information provided is unacceptable, the school must arrange for a local school bus company in the region of the airport to provide transportation to and from the hotel and to other destinations.

Schools should use yellow school buses to travel to and from NYC airports, unless the school plans to use MTA buses or subways to reach NYC airports.

18. When will the DOE issue a waiver in regard to Chancellor's Regulation A-670?

All schools must follow the protocol and requirements set forth in CR A-670 when organizing a trip. Requests for waivers will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and waivers will be issued only if there are extenuating circumstances.

19. Whom to contact when you have questions?

Questions about domestic trips should be directed to the FSC Director of Operations. It is recommended that schools submit their trip plans to their FSC for review when trips involve air travel, hotel stays, or higher risk activities such as swimming, zip-lining, etc. Questions about international trips should be directed to the superintendent, and require advance approval from the superintendent.