

Pima Unified School District #6
Employee Handbook



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ROUGHRIDERS**

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PIMA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a quality education for all students, in a safe and nurturing environment, in partnership with parents and our community. To most effectively meet students' needs, we are guided by shared Core Values.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We value each student. School staff will consistently provide a positive experience to each student.

We value quality teachers. Resources will be prioritized to recruit, retain, and support excellent teachers.

We value our pioneer heritage. We expect our students and staff to embody integrity, a strong work ethic, and responsibility to self and others.

We believe high expectations result in high achievement. Our curriculum will be aligned with higher education.

We value communication and involvement among students, families, school, and community.

We believe small classes provide the best environment for students and teachers.

We value consistent discipline.

We value opportunities for all students to participate in school activities.

We expect the appearance of our campus to reflect our commitment to a safe, orderly, and attractive learning environment.

We celebrate the achievements of our alumni and value them as role models.

We value technology as a tool to enhance education.

We expect our students to be good citizens in a global society.

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I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Definitions

- or
1. Administrator – Position which fits the definition by statute, including specific licensure and certification requirements, primary job responsibility.
 2. Teacher - Employee who receives a teacher’s contract. The provisions of the Teacher Employment Agreement will also apply to school nurses, social workers, physical therapists and occupational therapists.
 3. Administrative Support – Position which fits the definition by job description, such as district or school secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodial staff, route drivers, maintenance, & food service.
 4. Duty Days: All days when employees are required to be at their schools or places of assignment.

II. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. Code of Ethics

All employees of the District are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships. These standards must be idealistic and at the same time practical, so that they can apply reasonably to all staff members. The employees acknowledge that the schools belong to the public they serve for the purpose of providing educational opportunities to all. However, every employee assumes responsibility for providing leadership in the school and community. This responsibility requires the employee to maintain standards of exemplary conduct. It must be recognized that the employee’s actions will be viewed and appraised by the community, associates, and students. To these ends, the Board adopts the following statements of standards.

1. Makes the well-being of students the fundamental value of all decision making and actions.
2. Maintains just, courteous, and proper relationships with students, parents, staff members, and others.
3. Strives for the maintenance of efficiency and knowledge of developments in the employee’s field of work.
4. Fulfills job responsibilities with honesty and integrity.
5. Directs any criticism of other staff members or of any department of the school system toward improving the District. Such constructive criticism is to be made directly to the school

administrator who has the responsibility for improving the situation.

6. Supports the principle of due process and protects the civil and human rights of all individuals.
7. Obeys local, state, and national laws and does not knowingly join or support organizations that advocate, directly or indirectly, the overthrow of the government.
8. Implements the Governing Board's policies and administrative rules and regulations.
9. Refrains from using school contacts and privileges to promote partisan politics, sectarian religious views, or selfish propaganda of any kind.
10. Pursues appropriate measures to correct any laws, policies, or regulations that are not consistent with sound educational goals.
11. Avoids using position for personal gain through political, social, religious, economic, and other influence.
12. Maintains the standards and seeks to improve the effectiveness of the profession through research and continuing professional development.
13. Stresses the proper use and protection of all school properties, equipment, and materials.
14. Honors all contracts until fulfillment or release.

In the performance of duties, employees shall keep in confidence any information they may secure unless disclosures serves District purposes or is required by law.

B. Adherence To And Dissemination of Board Policies

1. Adhere to all policies of the Governing Board and the executive decisions of the Superintendent.
2. When policies, guidelines, procedures and directives have been finally adopted, it is the responsibility of all administrators to assure that these directions are communicated to all of the affected staff members under their supervision.

C. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

1. The objectives of the District's hiring process are to further develop and maintain equal employment opportunity for all personnel; to

eliminate all traces of discrimination in employment practices because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability at all levels of employment throughout the District.

2. It is the responsibility of each and every administrator to ensure that equal employment opportunity exists.

D. Statement of Intent to Comply

The Pima Unified School District affirms its intent to comply with all Federal and State laws relating to the prevention of discrimination. All courses, services, activities, and employment opportunities are offered without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability and retaliation.

This compliance is to include, but not be limited to, the regulations of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Title VII of the Civil Right Act of 1964, the Fair Labor Standards Act, The United States Constitution, The Arizona Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1972, Americans with Disabilities Act and Federal Vocational Education Guidelines.

III. **PRE-EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS**

A. Loyalty Oath

In compliance with A.R.S. 38-231, all employees are required at time of employment to sign an oath affirming support of the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution and Laws of the State of Arizona. (See Appendix for Oath)

B. Immigration and Naturalization Information

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control act, all new employees are required to complete the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) form documenting their identity and eligibility to work in the United States.

C. Fingerprinting and Conviction Information

In compliance with A.R.S. 15-512, all personnel hired by Pima Unified School District must be fingerprinted as a condition of employment.

D. Immunization Requirements

Arizona Department of Health Regulations require an immunization record for each school employee showing immunity for measles and/or rubella to be on file prior to employment.

E. License Requirements

Persons employed in positions which require them to drive District vehicles are required to have or obtain the appropriate Driver's License for the vehicle operated before or immediately following employment and must maintain a valid license while the driving of District vehicles remains a job requirement.

F. Transportation

A. Bus Driver Requirements

Bus Drivers will be employed during training. All drivers of school buses are required by law to have a valid Commercial Driver's License with a "P" endorsement and an "S" endorsement, a State of Arizona School Bus Driver's Certificate, complete a driver training course, First Aid training, CPR training and pass a pre-employment drug/alcohol testing as per A.R.S. 15-513. The employee will be reimbursed for the cost of the pre-employment medical examination and pre-employment drug/alcohol test upon satisfactory completion of the initial probationary period and upon the recommendation of the Director of Transportation of Learners and Safety.

Transportation employees may also be asked to submit to drug and alcohol testing where the supervisor of the employee or supervisor's designee has probable cause that the employee's job performance has been impaired.

B. Drug/Alcohol Testing

Commercial Drivers License Holders

The Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing act of 1991, which became effective on January 1, 1995, requires random and post accident drug and alcohol testing and provides for probable cause testing of all employees of the District who are required to have a commercial driver's license (CDL) for performance of job duties. In addition, under Arizona Revised Statutes 15-513, staff members involved in the maintenance and service of vehicles used to transport students, Transportation Department staff members involved in dispatching and supervision, and staff members transporting any student in any vehicle for any District event are subject to drug and alcohol testing where their supervisor has probable cause that the employee's job performance has been impaired by drug or alcohol use.

IV. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

A. Work Week

The regular work week for all classified employees shall be Monday through Thursday. If deemed advisable or necessary to modify the regular work week of individual employees or groups of employees, reasonable advance notice shall be given the affected employees whenever possible. Departments may use alternative work schedules for employees to meet District and departmental needs or work performed while students are not required to be in attendance or when environmental conditions may be adverse.

The regular work week for administrators and professional staff is determined by the instructional calendar and the schedule of professional development.

The regular work week for all classified employees is used for determining eligibility for overtime pay or compensatory time for hours worked in excess of forty (40).

B. Professional Staff Work Hours

Site administrators shall establish the hours of each employee. Hours may range anywhere from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm. For more information refer to Policy GCL.

C. Classified Staff Work Hours

Site administrators shall establish the hours of each employee, depending on the contract hours. Hours may range anywhere from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm.

D. Time Sheets, Pay Periods and Pay Days

Time sheets are due into the District Office as per scheduled. Time sheets filled out incorrectly may result in delay of a paycheck. It is the employees responsibility to make sure time sheets are filled out correctly, with the correct signatures obtained. (See Appendix for Sample Schedule & Time Sheet.)

Pay periods are two (2) calendar weeks in length, beginning on Monday and ending on Sunday. Paychecks for all employees are issued on a biweekly basis every other Thursday.

Paychecks are distributed to employees at the school or other facility where they work. Questions concerning pay, payroll deductions or other related payroll matters will be brought to the attention of the District Office.

E. Lunch Periods and Rest Breaks

Scheduling of lunch periods and rest breaks is the responsibility of the immediate supervisor. Lunch periods are a minimum of thirty (30) minutes in length.

F. Probationary Periods

Employees newly appointed to a regular position, and those transferred to a new position, shall have the benefit of a ninety (90) calendar day probationary period during which they will be given an opportunity to become familiar with their duties and to demonstrate their ability to perform satisfactorily.

The base probationary period shall be ninety (90) calendar days in length, but may be extended to a maximum of one hundred eighty (180) calendar days at the discretion of the supervisor, if additional time should be required to conclusively evaluate an employee's performance.

Following initial appointment of new employees, termination for unsatisfactory performance during the probationary period may occur at any time, at the sole discretion of the District, without recourse to the grievance procedure.

G. Attendance and Absenteeism

All employees are expected to be present during all of their working hours. Absence without prior approval, chronic absences and habitual tardiness or abuses of designated working hours may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

It is the responsibility of the employee to notify the District secretary promptly in case of absence. Failure to report absences promptly may result in disciplinary action. Failure to report to work on the first workday may be cause for dismissal. Failure to report an absence after two (2) consecutive workdays will result in disciplinary action that may lead to and include termination. In case of a planned absence (sick leave, vacation, military duty, etc.), the supervisor must be notified in advance of the absence.

When a Professional Staff member must be absent they must contact the Substitute Manager by calling or texting Lori Hoopes, (928)651-2416, as soon as they know work will be missed. It is best to notify by 6:00 am. If there is no answer leave a message and call the school principal. Unless confirmation is received that a substitute is arranged the professional staff member is expected to be present at the beginning of the school day.

Excessive absenteeism is defined as more days used than accrued in a calendar year based upon the number of leave days accrued per the calendar. Excessive absenteeism does not automatically equate to

discipline/adverse action, but does provide a qualifier around what is considered "excessive". Legitimate cases, including illness or other circumstances, provide guidance for empathy in working with employees.

H. Record Information

Any changes occurring during employment (i.e. change of name, address, phone number, marital status, number of dependents for tax withholding purposes, person to notify in case of emergency, etc) must be brought to the attention of the District office.

I. Safety

All employees have the responsibility to maintain safe conditions in their work areas and to make safety a part of the normal work routine. Failure to observe safe work practices and procedures may be cause for disciplinary action including termination.

J. Searches

Desks, lockers, cabinets and other school provided storage spaces are subject to searches if cause is warranted.

K. Staff Conflict of Interest

1. Employment of Close Relative

No person employed by the District may be supervised directly by an immediate relative (father, mother, son, daughter, sister, brother, or spouse). This will apply for summer or part-time work as well as for full-time employment.

2. Business Relations

Any employee who has, or whose relative has, a substantial interest in any decision of the District, shall make known this interest in the official records of the District, and shall refrain from participating in any manner as an employee in such a decision.

3. Vendor Relations

No employee of the District will accept gifts from any person, group, or entity doing, or desiring to do, business with the District. The acceptance of any business-related gratuity is specifically prohibited, except for widely distributed, advertising items of nominal value.

This policy should not be construed to deem unacceptable inexpensive novelty advertising items of general distribution. Acceptance of business meals and holiday gifts for general consumption are acceptable under this policy.

L. Notification of Criminal Charges

It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Superintendent as soon as possible should an employee of the District be formally charged by legal authorities of any felony or misdemeanor, except for minor traffic violations,.

M. Notice of Subpoena, Summons, or Legal Complaint

Any administrator who is served with a subpoena, summons, or legal complaint on a matter relating to his/her employment or any other matter relating to the District, must notify the District Office as soon as possible.

V. GENERAL EMPLOYMENT PROVISIONS

A. Professional Staff Hiring

Board Policy GCF (G-3450); GCF-R (G-3461)

It shall be the policy of the District to employ and retain the best qualified personnel. This will be accomplished by giving careful consideration to qualifications and by providing competitive salary schedules within the financial capabilities of the District, adequate facilities, and good working conditions. (See Appendix for complete policy)

1. Prior Teaching Verification

Before employment a teacher is recommended to the Board, the teacher just provide verification of prior teaching experience to the District Office in order to receive a contract reflecting credit for that experience.

Teachers who have been served with a Notice of Inadequate Classroom Performance as stipulated in A.R.S. 15-538, A.R.S. 15-538.01, and A.R.S. 15-539 will not be eligible for a salary increase until the notice is removed due to improved classroom performance. Assistance and feedback is available to any teacher who has been served with a Notice of Inadequate Classroom Performance.

2. Teaching Other Than Full Load

A full load at the high school and the middle school is 6 teaching periods. Teachers teaching less than a full load will be paid based on an appropriate fraction of full salary for every class period taught. Teachers carrying more than a full load will be paid based on an appropriate fraction of salary.

3. Compensation for Stipend

a. Definition:

Stipend – additional compensation paid in the form of a fixed amount issued as a contract for specific responsibilities with determined beginning and ending dates. An example would be coaching.

b. Athletics

1. No teacher will coach any interscholastic activity in a school to which he/she does not have a teaching assignment unless he/she has the written permission of the principal(s) of the school(s) to which he/she is assigned. The permission must include a statement that the coaching assignment will not interfere severely with the individual's teaching assignment.
2. High School head coaches must have a current State Department of Education teaching, substitute, or coaching certificate on file. See Athletic Handbook for more detailed coaching qualifications.

B. Professional Staff Duties and Responsibilities

Every teacher shall:

1. Hold students to strict account for disorderly conduct.
2. Exercise supervision over students on the playgrounds and during recess if assigned to such duty.
3. Keep a school register of grades, which the Governing Board shall carefully preserve as one of the records of the school. If a register is not available teachers will print out grades every quarter.
4. Make the decision to promote or retain a student in grade in a common school or to pass or fail a student in a course in high school. Such decisions may be overturned only as provided in A.R.S. 15-342.
5. Comply with all rules, regulations, and policies of the Governing Board that relate to the duties as prescribed.

A teacher shall not use sectarian or denominational books or teach any sectarian doctrines or conduct religious exercises.

A teacher who fails to comply with the above is guilty of unprofessional conduct and may be subject to disciplinary action by the Governing Board and by the State Board of Education.

C. Professional Contracts and Compensations

Board Policy GCB (G-2150); GCBA (G-2200); GCBC (G-2400)
See Appendix for complete Policy.

D. Professional Contract Renewal

The Governing Board shall offer a teaching contract to each certificated teacher unless sufficient notification has been given of the board's intent not to offer a contract pursuant to Arizona Revised Statute, Title 15, Chapter 5, Article 3.

E. Support Staff Hiring

Board Policy GDF (G-7655); GDF-R (G-7661); GDFR (G-7700)
It shall be the policy of the District to employ and retain the best qualified personnel. This will be accomplished by giving careful consideration to qualifications and by providing competitive wages within the financial capabilities of the District, adequate facilities, and good working conditions.
(See Appendix for complete Policy)

F. Support Staff Contracts and Compensations

Board Policy GDB (G-6800); GDBA (6850)
See Appendix for complete Policy.

G. Position Design and Evaluation

All positions in the District shall be evaluated by the immediate supervisor or designee as stated by the superintendent.

H. Employment/Transfers

1. Posting of Vacancies

Certified and Classified vacancies will be advertised in-house, within the local community, and posted on the website.

2. Interviews

a. A structured format will be utilized in conducting all interviews.

b. Interview teams will include person(s) with whom the successful candidate will work.

c. Each interviewing committee will consist of no less than three (3) individuals.

3. Voluntary Transfer to Another Position

a. Requests for voluntary transfer will be initiated by the

employee and submitted through his/her supervisor to the Superintendent.

- b. If an employee is not transferred to the position for which he/she has applied, he/she will be given, upon written request, the reasons he/she was not transferred.
- c. The Superintendent has final authority regarding assignments.

4. Involuntary Transfer to Another Position

The Superintendent will determine all assignments. Such assignments shall be based on the needs of the District. The transfer of staff members will be based on the needs of the District. Assignments may be changed to serve the best interests of the District.

5. Voluntary Transfer to a Teaching Position (Requires Valid Teacher Certification)

An administrator who voluntarily asks to return to teaching will be considered for a teaching position for which he/she is qualified. If he/she is offered a teaching position, he/she will be placed on the teacher's salary schedule with credit for all prior teaching and administrative or administrative support service in the District and teaching service credit in other districts for which he/she would have been eligible at the time of his/her initial employment by the Pima Unified School District.

I. Professional Staff Resignation

All resignations or requests to be released from contract shall be presented in writing to the Board for approval. A release from an uncompleted contract may be granted contingent upon the availability of a well-qualified certificated teacher as a replacement. A teacher who resigns contrary to this policy shall be deemed to have committed an unprofessional act and shall be subject to the penalty as provided under Arizona statutes and State Board of Education regulations.

J. Support Staff Resignation

Employees voluntarily terminating their service with the District are expected to give advance notice of not less than ten (10) working days. This notice shall be submitted to the supervisor in writing and should specify both the last day of work and the reason for terminating.

K. Professional Staff Termination or Demotion

Notification of a termination or demotion shall be in writing and issued by the Superintendent or designee. The notification shall include Notice of Right to Appeal following the process outlined in Board Policy GBK (G-1800). (See Appendix for complete Policy)

L. Reduction in Professional Staff

If a reduction of professional staff is necessary Board Policy GCQA (G-5800) will be followed. (See Appendix for complete Policy)

M. Reduction in Administrative Support Staff

If a reduction of administrative support personnel is necessary Board Policy GDQA (G-9150) will be followed. (See Appendix for complete Policy)

N. Staff Conduct

Board Policy GBEB (G-0750); GBEB-R (G-0761)
See Appendix for complete Policy.

O. Staff Conduct with Students

Board Policy GBEBB (G-0856)
See Appendix for complete Policy.

P. Evaluations

1. Professional Staff Evaluation

Board Policy GCO (G-5350); GCO-RA (G-5361)

The process of evaluation for professional staff members shall lead to improvement of the quality of instruction and the strengthening of the abilities of the professional staff. (See Appendix for complete Policy)

2. Appeal Procedure

Board Policy GCO-RB (G-5362)

When an evaluation is used as the criterion for establishing a teacher's compensation, the teacher will be so informed at the conference where the evaluation is discussed. A written appeal may be made no later than ten (10) days after the conference where the disputed evaluation is discussed. (See Appendix for complete Policy)

3. Evaluation of Support Staff

Board Policy GDO (G-8900)

A written evaluation of effectiveness of each support staff shall be completed during the first year of employment and not later than the probationary period of ninety (90) days following the first day of work. A second first-year evaluation will be no later than the anniversary date of employment. At least once each year thereafter, an evaluation will be conducted. See Appendix for complete Policy.

Q. Professional Development

Board Policy GCFI (G-4100)

Professional development is required of all employees. Teachers are expected to obtain 30 hours or 3 credit hours of professional development each school year. Employees are **required** to attend all District and school site in-service and staff meetings regardless of whether the 30 hours or 3 credit hours of professional development have been satisfied.

R. Non-exempt Administrative Support Employees

Administrative Support Employees who are non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act regulations are entitled to overtime pay.

1. Overtime

Board Policy GDL-R (G-8461)

Overtime is defined as time worked in excess of forty (40) hours in any work week. Unauthorized time worked beyond scheduled work hours may be cause for disciplinary action.

VI. ABSENCE WITH/WITHOUT PAY

A. Leave/Vacations/Holidays

Board Policy GCC (G-2500); GCCA (G-2550); GCCC (G-2900)

Each eligible full-time employee shall be credited annually with an undesignated leave allowance at the rate of one (1) day per month up to ten (10), or twelve (12) days, determined by the employment period. (See Appendix for complete policy)

B. Fringe Benefits

All employees who work more than thirty (30) hours per week may qualify to receive district benefits.

VII. INSURANCE PROGRAMS

A. Group Insurance Program

The District will pay 100% of a full-time employee only health insurance premium for each eligible employee. Dependent and family coverage is available at an additional cost for eligible employees. Please see District Office for prices and enrollment form.

Dental Insurance and Vision coverage are also available to eligible employees at additional costs. Please see District Office for prices and enrollment forms.

An employee who resigns, retires, and/or who is granted a Board-Approved Leave of Absence will have insurance continued until the end of the month in which active employment terminates, after which he/she will be eligible to continue group health, dental and other medical benefits under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). Under COBRA, the employee would have to pay the full premium.

B. Life

The District will pay 100% of a full-time employee only basic life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance premium in the amount of \$25,000 (\$50,000 for superintendent and principals) for each eligible full-time employee.

C. Disability

A long-term disability insurance program is furnished for all eligible employees through the Arizona State Retirement System.

D. Liability

Each administrator is covered by the District's liability insurance coverage while performing within the course and scope of their employment.

E. Workers' Compensation Insurance

Workers' Compensation benefits are payable to all employees without regard to liability in the case of injury, disability, or death as the result of occupational hazards.

In order to establish possible rights to Workers' Compensation insurance, employees must immediately report all accidents or injuries occurring on the job, however minor, to their supervisor.

Employee absences for work-related injuries/illnesses are charged against an employee's leave days for the first seven (7) days. For absences that extend past seven (7) calendar days, the employee is paid his/her wages (up to the maximum set by state law) from Workers' Compensation insurance beginning on the eighth (8th) day.

Employees absent due to work-related injuries or illness must comply with District policies and procedures for the Family and Medical Leave Act and/or Board-Approved Leave of Absence.

An employee returning from Workers' Compensation shall submit a written release from the attending physician. The release must give the date of return to work and stipulate any restrictions to work.

Employees are not permitted to engage in unauthorized outside employment while on Family and Medical Leave or a Board-Approved Leave of Absence.

F. Leave Under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Board Policy GCCC-EB (G-2932); GCCC-EC (G-2933)
See Appendix for complete Policy.

VIII. TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

A. Mileage

Any employee who travels on behalf of the Pima Unified School District must take a school vehicle if one is available. One (1) vehicle will be made available for an event, and employees will share the transportation. If a school vehicle is not available, reimbursement is available in the amount of .445 cents per mile. Mileage calculation must be from the Pima School Campus, to destination, and back to the Pima School Campus. Travel Expense Forms are available in the District Office.

B. Meals

Any employee who travels on behalf of the Pima Unified School District can receive per diem expenses for meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) if the event necessitating the travel does not provide them. For travel within the state of Arizona per diem rates are:

\$ 7.00 - Breakfast

\$ 10.00 - Lunch

\$17.00 - Dinner

For travel outside Arizona contact the District Office for accurate per diem rates.

Travel Expense Forms are available in the District Office, and must be completed prior to travel to eligible for per diem expense coverage. All travel expense forms must be approved by site administrator prior to submission.

C. Hotel Accommodations

Any employee needing hotel accommodations must submit a Travel Request Form. The Business office will book all hotel reservations.

IX. BUYBACK TERMINATING EMPLOYEE'S UNUSED LEAVE

Board Policy GCCA (G-2550)

An employee who retires or voluntarily terminates in good standing after five (5) years or more years in the District's employ will be compensated at the rate of one-half (1/2) of the employee's regular per diem rate of pay for each day of unused accumulated undesignated/sick leave, not to exceed a maximum of eighty (80) days. Payment will be made after the employee's final workday.

X. ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSPORTATION POLICY

During school or school-sponsored functions, students may be transported only in school-approved vehicles operated by District-authorized personnel unless specific approval by the Superintendent has been obtained.

The Board specifically forbids any employee to transport students for school purposes without prior authorization by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent may develop regulations to govern the use of private vehicles for transporting students. (See Appendix for Full Policy Manual)

XI. DRESS CODE

A professional and conservative image should be the standard for the workplace. Employee dress must be in compliance with state and federal safety guidelines and meet OSHA standards. In accord with Policy GBEB-R, Site administrators will articulate specific guidelines for staff at their sites.
(See Appendix for Full Policy Manual)

XII. TECHNOLOGY

Technology in the Pima School District offers many learning opportunities. Persons who intentionally or unintentionally vandalize, damage, destroy, or modify technology resources without authorization may be held responsible for repairs or replacement. Technology resources include, but are not limited to, computers, printers, software, on-line catalogs, network file servers, a district-wide e-mail system, and access to the Internet. The Internet and a computer network are available to authorized students, teachers and other staff. The school district provides technology resources for education purposes only. Some worldwide resources available on the Internet, however, are not of educational value in a school setting. A Technology Acceptable Use Policy serves to protect the interests of the school district and its technology resources users. (See Appendix for Complete Technology Use Agreement)

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APPENDIX

- Board Policy GCF, GCFR
- Board Policy GCB, GCBA, GCBC
- Board Policy GCO-RA
- Board Policy GDF, GDF-R, GDFA
- Board Policy GDB, GDBA
- Board Policy GBK
- Board Policy GCQA
- Board Policy GBEB, GBEB-RA
- Board Policy GBEBB
- Board Policy GCO-RB
- Board Policy GDO
- Board Policy GCC, GCCA, GCCC
- Board Policy GCCC-EB, GCCC-EC
- Board Policy GCCA
- Board Policy GCFE-E Loyalty Oath
- Board Policy EEAG, EEAG-R Transportation Policy
- Board Policy GBEB – RB Staff Dress Code
- The Trust TIB #34 – Activity Trips

[Note: Updated Policies are available online at lp.ctspublish.com/asba/]

The Trust

Arizona School Risk Retention Trust, Inc.

Technical Information Bulletin No. 34

Subject: ACTIVITY TRIPS, A PROCESS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

To: Members, Arizona School Risk Retention Trust, Inc.

Re: Activity Trips (Field Trips)

FOR USE BY

This Bulletin is for use by District Administration, Principals and Teachers Involved in the planning and supervision of activity trips.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Technical Information Bulletin (TIB) is to inform Members of the Arizona School Risk Retention Trust, Inc. of the preparation needed to safely and effectively conduct activity trips.

ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVITY TRIPS

Activity trips (often called "field trips") have been an important part of the education experience for many years. It must be remembered that the activity trip is an extension of the classroom and all of the legal responsibilities of the teacher in the classroom apply to activity trips. While such trips are almost always concluded without incident, experience has shown that such trips can be dangerous and should be carefully planned. Over the years the *Arizona* School Risk Retention Trust, Inc. (Trust) has investigated numerous injuries that have occurred during or as a result of an activity trip. In each case the injury could have been avoided if certain precautions had been taken prior to the start of the trip, or the trip had been cancelled due to the inappropriateness of the activity. The Trust has developed this bulletin for the purpose of assisting school districts to develop a procedure for safe and effective activity trips.

This Bulletin includes information on selecting a destination for an activity trip, how to plan and conduct the trip, and what records should be prepared and maintained as part of the process. This Bulletin is presented in six parts as follows:

Section 1: "RATIONALE FOR ACTIVITY TRIPS", includes a short introduction on choosing an activity trip, provides general guidelines to follow to make the selection process meaningful for teachers (trip leaders) and principals.

Section 2: "SELECTING A DESTINATION", includes information on different categories of activity trips that might be included on a validated list of appropriate activities or destinations.

Section 3: "ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES AND GUIDELINES", Teachers and Administrators should use this section to determine if a requested activity trip is safe and appropriate for students. This section also discusses appropriate risk analysis and forms that should be included in any activity trip policy.

Section 4: "TRANSPORTATION", provides information to be considered when arranging transportation for the activity trip.

Section 5: "SUPERVISION", outlines information to be considered when arranging supervision of students on the activity trip.

Section 6: "RECORD KEEPING", provides suggestions on records that should be kept to document the activity trip.

SECTION 1: RATIONALE FOR ACTIVITY TRIPS

Traditionally an activity trip (or field trip) is a visit to a location away from the regular classroom designed to enhance, motivate and support the instructional program or the school. Activity trips add variety to the instructional program and tend to be special learning experiences that help develop positive attitudes toward classroom activities. They also help students appreciate the relevance and importance of what they learn in the classroom. Activity trips provide an opportunity to involve students, parents, and the community in the school and its instructional programs. In more recent times activity trips have expanded to include adventure outings to promote personal development, and end of term recreational trips.

Factors to Consider in the Selection of Activity Trips

To be educationally beneficial, an activity trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class, and a plan for students to assimilate the experience during and after the trip. To this end, teachers and principals should consider the following factors in the selection of activity trips:

1. Does the trip enhance or extend the curriculum being explored at that time?
2. Is the trip age appropriate?
3. Are there any hazards that would make the trip an inappropriate activity?
4. Does the trip provide learning situations that are not available in another way?
5. Is the trip cost effective?
6. Is there appropriate transportation available?

Before an activity trip begins, it is important to prepare both staff and students. Successful activity trips require considerable planning. Student activities must be scheduled and arrangements must be coordinated among school personnel, parents, and persons at the destination. In addition, arrangements must be made for transportation, student supervision, food and special equipment or clothing, where needed. The more carefully an activity trip is planned, the more likely it will be completed within plan and without incident.

SECTION 2: SELECTING A DESTINATION

Approved Activity Trips:

Selecting an appropriate destination is important to the success of an activity trip. Each school should prepare a list of approved activities and/or destinations to be published as Validated Activity Trip Experiences. The list of Validated Activity Trips should consist of general categories instead of specific places.

Trip Validation

Activity trips have long been an important part of active education, especially in offering students new and exciting experiences and challenges. In selecting a subject and location for an activity trip, leaders must take all reasonable measures so the sense of excitement is achieved without causing harm to the participants. Listed below are subjects and destinations that have traditionally resulted in successful activity trip:

Academic competitions/contests	Government
Athletic competitions/contests	buildings/agencies/properties
Art galleries/centers/exhibits	Historical/archeological sites
Businesses/industries	Libraries/media centers
Civic associations/clubs	Manufacturing/processing
Environmental study sites/centers	facilities
Fairs/festivals	Military installations
Farms/dairies/groves	Museums

Musical

performances/festivals/concerts

Parades

Parks/recreation departments

Performing arts centers / IMAX
theaters

Research/technical facilities

Schools/colleges/universities

Sports/athletic facilities

Stadiums/arenas

Student organization

meeting/competition/conference

Theme parks

Transportation facilities

Utility departments

Even selection of these traditional destinations still requires careful planning in order to ensure a successful and safe activity trip.

If the activity trip involves a less traditional destination, greater scrutiny must be provided before the trip is approved. The biggest factor in a non-traditional trip is the availability of an adequate number of qualified supervisory personnel. For instance, if the activity trip involves a boat trip on open waters, has there been a determination of the ratio of supervisors to students and the skills required of each supervisor? Any approved non-traditional trip should be subject to a site-specific assessment prior to the trip being approved.

Approval for an activity trip destination should be obtained from the school principal. An activity trip may be approved as long as the destination matches the intended purpose, is appropriate, falls within one of the validated categories listed, and the principal is in agreement with the selection. If a desired activity trip destination does not fit into one of the validated categories on the list, special consideration should be given to the activity trip request before it is approved.

SECTIONS: ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES AND GUIDELINES

Activity trips should be planned and conducted in accordance with specific administrative guidelines. The following steps are recommended to be part of any such guidelines.

- The school district and each school should have specific guidelines for activity trips.
- The school should publish a schedule of validated activity trip activities and/or destinations.
- The teacher should consult the validation schedule, review the educational value of the trip and then prepare the **Activity Trip Request Form (Exhibit 2)** in order to obtain the principal's approval prior to making the arrangements for the trip.
- The teacher should conduct a risk analysis of conditions that would make the trip an inappropriate activity using the **Activity Trip Exposure Analysis Checklist (Exhibit 3)** and discuss any identified issues with the principal.
- The teacher should prepare the **Activity Trip Permission Form (Exhibit 4)** to provide the student and parents, or guardians the necessary information to allow informed parental permission.

The Activity Trip Permission Form should provide both the student and the parents or guardians information concerning the purpose and destination of the trip, transportation, eating arrangements, date and time of departure, estimated time of return, trip itinerary, a list of special clothing or equipment, the school's emergency contact, and a list of environmental conditions expected on the trip.

- If there is a cost for the student to participate in the trip, it must be specifically communicated to the student and the parent or guardian.
- Included in the communication should be an alternative learning experience, in which the student would participate if not involved with the activity trip.
- Both the **Activity Trip Exposure Analysis Checklist (Exhibit 3)** and the completed **Activity Trip Permission Form (Exhibit 4)** should be presented to the principal for approval prior to the **Activity Trip Permission Form (Exhibit 4)** being sent to the parents or guardians for their permission for the student to participate in the activity trip.
- The completed Activity Trip Permission Form must be returned to the teacher signed by both the student and the parent or guardian.
- Volunteer adult supervisors, when approved by the principal, may assist the teacher in supervising responsibilities on the field trip. All supervisors are to be provided necessary information concerning the trip.
- The teacher must stipulate acceptable standards of conduct to the students in advance of the trip. The teacher always has primary responsibility for the conduct of the students.
- The teacher planning the activity trip should provide an appropriate alternative learning experience and supervision for students who do not participate in the activity trip.
- Students, employees and volunteers' safety must be a primary consideration of all activity trips.
- Should an emergency situation occur, the teacher must be responsible, and appropriately trained and equipped to quickly notify emergency personnel and appropriate district personnel.
- Private vehicles should not be used for school sponsored activity trips.
- Students must not be permitted to leave the group during the trip, nor return from the activity trip by other means unless the parent or guardian makes prior arrangements with the teacher and other appropriate school personnel.
- Prior approval must be obtained from the school administration if students are to return to the school from a trip after school hours. The teacher and principal should make arrangements for the student's safe departure home, taking into account the age of the students and the hour.
- Out of state activity trips must be approved by the school district governing board.
- Out of USA activity trips must be approved by the school district governing board and international insurance should be arranged through the Arizona School Risk Retention Trust, Inc.

Risk assessment is a process. For an activity trip to have the best chance of meeting its educational and safety goals the trip leader should develop a plan and timetable for the visit (*Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How?*). This will allow the trip leader to consider what could go wrong and how to avoid risks, or for specifically adventurous activities, how to manage the risks. The plan may need frequent modification until control measures are worked out. It may be necessary to visit the site prior to the trip to determine the following information.

Teacher Assessment Guidelines

Included in each risk assessment should be completion of specific written forms by specific designated individuals. The teacher organizing the activity trip needs to complete the ***Activity Trip Exposure Analysis Checklist (Exhibit 3)***, and prepare the ***Activity Trip Permission Form (Exhibit 2)***. When planning an activity trip, there are important environmental and logistical factors that must be considered along with the educational benefits of the trip. Once the appropriateness of activities to meet educational objectives has been determined, the trip leader needs to look at four factors:

1. **The Activity:** Is the activity in an environment that is relatively unchanging (e.g. a trip to a museum), or is the activity in an environment that can change very quickly in unpredictable ways (e.g. an outdoor adventure activity)?
2. **The Location:** Is the trip taking place in an urban or rural area; are there adequate eating, comfort and medical facilities to accommodate the trip?
3. **Season/Climate:** Is there the potential of weather changes that could significantly impact the trip (e.g. a trip to Flagstaff from Phoenix in March)?
4. **Supervision:** Are there an adequate number of suitably competent teachers, school staff and volunteers to supervise the activity trip?

The Activity Trip Exposure Analysis Checklist (Exhibit 3) should be used to identify potential problems.

Principal Assessment Guidelines

The principal should review the information provided by the teacher, along with the ***Activity Trip Request Form (Exhibit 2)*** and approve the trip, reject the trip, or request additional assessment prior to making a decision. In doing so the principal should keep in mind the following:

1. Does the activity trip allow for the widest possible participation of the students eligible to participate, and are there appropriate alternative learning experiences available to those students who do not participate?

2. Does the activity trip provide the students with an opportunity for learning not available in the classroom while at the same time meeting the educational objectives of the curriculum developed for the activity trip participants?
3. Have safety considerations been fully considered by the trip leader(s) and have hazards been communicated to the participants and their parents or guardians?
4. Are there identified hazards that are not "worth the risk" to allow the trip to take place?

SECTION 4: TRANSPORTATION

Lessons learned from claims and lawsuits associated with activity trips indicate that accidents related to transportation have the most serious consequences. There are numerous issues related to transportation safety, and the school is strongly encouraged to consult the Trust's ***Transportation Safety Manual*** as a routine part of trip planning. Some of the issues that need to be taken into consideration are:

Means of transportation selected. If the means of transportation is other than a school bus operated by school district personnel it is the duty of the school district to be sure that the vehicles being used for transportation are safe and are being operated by competent persons. ***If private passenger vehicles, (including vans of any size) are being used it is imperative that seat belts be used at all times the vehicle is in operation.***

Verification needs to be made to ensure the person operating vehicles is familiar with the specific type, and in some cases need special licenses to operate certain vehicles.

- **Route to the destination.** The route should be preplanned and, if possible, driven prior to the trip. The route needs to be clearly communicated to all drivers and contingent plans agreed to in the event that any problems are encountered in route. On the day of the trip local authorities should be consulted to determine if there are adverse conditions that would affect travel. Additional driving/transportation issues to be considered are:
 1. Adverse road conditions
 2. Darkness
 3. Unfamiliar road
 4. Lack of adequate time allowed to meet schedule
 5. Fatigued drivers

- **Probability of encountering an unsafe situation.** Some roads, intersections and destinations are known to pose greater than average probability of encountering an unsafe situation. This needs to be explored and discussed with vehicle operators prior to the trip. Alternative routes or planned times need to be developed to minimize the probability of unsafe situations. Examples of unsafe situations include:

Probability of other erratic drivers (e.g. State Route 68 between Kingman, AZ and Bullhead City, AZ)

Probability of conflicts with pedestrians/cyclists (e.g. trip to a university campus)

Probability of difficult environmental conditions (e.g. driving westbound on U.S. Route 60 west of Wickenburg, AZ just prior to sundown)

Accommodations for parking. Many destinations have limited parking available, especially for large school buses. Parking can be a frustrating and dangerous situation, especially if there has not been advanced planning. Therefore, parking accommodations need to be discussed with the destination prior to the trip and clearly communicated with vehicle operators, including a contingency plan should the primary parking location be unavailable. When selecting either a primary or contingent parking location, consideration must be given to pedestrian hazards that will be encountered between the parking location and the ultimate destination.

- **Appropriate supervision.** A.R.S. Section 15-341A.17 requires that the governing board of each school district establish procedures to provide adequate supervision over students in instructional and non-instructional settings by certificated or non-certificated personnel. To comply with this statutory requirement, the best practice for a trip leader is to be sure that the following actions are taken during the entire period of transportation to and from the destination:
 1. Trip leaders and volunteers must be within the physical presence and within the line of vision of the students so the trip supervisors will have a reasonable opportunity to control students' behavior, and assist students if necessary.
 2. If it is necessary in an emergency situation for a teacher to leave the physical presence of the students, then the teacher must designate another school employee to supervise the students during the teachers' absence.
 3. In no case shall the teacher leave students unsupervised.

SECTION 5: SUPERVISION

Just as when students are at school, district policies and procedures concerning supervision of students apply to an activity trip, as well as the travel to or from the destination. In order to ensure compliance with school district policies, the trip leader needs to arrange an adequate number of certified and non-certified personnel or volunteers to act as supervisors on the trip. To determine the number of personnel needed to ensure adequate supervision a number of steps should be taken:

1. Contact the activity trip site to determine if there are required ratios of adults to students that are pre-established by the activity trip destination;
2. Consider the age of students. The younger the age of the students participating in the activity trip the greater the amount of supervision required. Consider the type of activity trip. The more adventurous the activities trip the greater amount of appropriately trained supervision that is required.
3. An appropriate person to accompany students on an activity trip should:
 - a. Be a certified or non-certified employee of the district, if volunteers are being used, they should be a responsible adult, 18 years of age or older.
 - b. Be known to the trip leader and/or other appropriate school personnel.
 - c. Be able to exercise good judgment in dealing with children.
 - d. Be fully committed to volunteering without other familial or work obligations.
 - e. For trips requiring specific skill sets of supervisory personnel, possess the necessary skill sets.
5. To ensure the best chance of having a safe activity trip, all supervisory personnel must be provided with the following information:
 - a. Purpose of the activity trip
 - b. That family members or others in the care of the supervisory personnel are NOT allowed on the activity trip
 - c. Departure and return times (be at school 30 minutes before departure)
 - d. Appropriate supervision of a group of students
 - e. The names of students to be supervised
 - f. Agree on how to manage behavior problems
 - g. Medical, dietary or other special needs for students within the assigned group
 - h. Lunch plans
 - i. Appropriate dress and gear for the trip
 - j. The cell phone numbers of other supervisory personnel on the trip, if available.
6. Thirty (30) minutes before departure, each supervisory person should be:
 - a. Introduced to students for whom the chaperone is responsible
 - b. Provided with:
 1. A watch (if they do not have one)
 2. A nametag
 3. A roster of participants
 4. A list of important phone numbers
 5. The trip itinerary

Once the group reaches the destination, it is essential that everyone involved understand the supervision arrangements and expectations. Potential danger points can occur as the activity

begins and the group of students becomes mobile. As the group of students is being rearranged to begin the trip special note should be taken.

When a large group is split into smaller groups for specific activities;

1. When groups transfer from one activity to another and change supervisor;
2. During periods between activities;
3. When small groups reform into large groups.

It is important that these danger points be discussed in advance with supervisory personnel and that it is understood that each supervisor must take responsibility for their part of the group, particularly during periods of changeover. It is also important that the trip planning not place volunteers with the same responsibility as school district personnel. Volunteers should work under the direction of school district personnel to supplement supervision and be responsible for the group of students only in specific predetermined circumstances.

SECTION 6: RECORD KEEPING

Records and record keeping is an important part of any activity trip. A district policy for activity trips should be adopted, recorded, shared with the individual schools, and on file in the district office. A sample district policy for activity trips is located in Exhibit 1.

Additionally, there are pertinent records that should be developed and maintained for each activity trip a school provides. The minimum records that should be on record for each activity trip include:

1. **Activity Trip Request Form (Exhibit 2)**, to be submitted to the school principal with the completed **Activity Trip Exposure Analysis Checklist (Exhibit 3)**
2. **Activity Trip Exposure Analysis Checklist (Exhibit 3)**, which should include a reference to the generic risks associated with the activity; the corresponding qualifications and experience of the trip leader; a list of site-specific risks; and a corresponding list of control measures to be applied which takes into account the age and abilities of the student group.
3. **Activity Trip Permission Form**, which is developed to notify the parents or guardians of students eligible to participate in the activity trip, the purpose of the trip, any special requirements associated with the trip, any unusual risks associated with the trip, and the alternative activity that will be made available for those eligible

students who do not participate in the trip.

- 4. Activity Trip Report**, which should evaluate the success of the activity trip against the objective, set out any unusual circumstances encountered on the trip, and provides recommendations to improve the safety and quality of the trip.

All forms, permission slips and reports should be maintained at the school office and retained for a minimum of three (3) years as a record of the trip and to provide others planning the same or similar trip with valuable information to help ensure each trip is better and safer than the last.

SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTIVITY TRIPS

Current File:	Adopted:	Amended:	Revised:

District Name : _____

District Address: _____

PURPOSE

Activity trips are designed to stimulate student interest and to provide opportunities for social growth and development. Activity trips are considered appropriate extensions of the classroom. Activity trips may be approved to the extent that they provide the most effective means for accomplishing general curriculum objectives of the School District.

FACTORS IN SELECTION OF FIELD TRIPS

To be educationally beneficial, an activity trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class and opportunities for students to assimilate the experience during and at the conclusion of the trip. To this end, teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in the selection of field trips:

- A. Value of the activity to the particular class group(s)
- B. Any hazards that would make the trip an inappropriate activity
- C. Relationship of the activity trip to a particular aspect of classroom instruction
- D. Suitability of the activity and distance traveled in terms of the age level
- E. Mode of transportation
- F. Cost

ACTIVITY TRIP REQUEST FORM

Name of School: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Name of person requesting trip: _____

Position of person requesting trip: _____

Name of person who will be the trip leader: _____

School district's emergency contact: _____

Phone number of school district's emergency contact: _____

Destination of trip: _____

Address of destination: _____

Contact person at destination: _____

Phone number of contact person: _____

Number of students participating: _____

Number of supervisors: _____

Time of departure and return: _____

What activities are taking place?

Estimated cost of activity trip: _____

Estimated cost per student participant: _____

Principal approval signature: _____

Governing Board approval signature (if needed):

ACTIVITY TRIP EXPOSURE ANALYSIS CHECKLIST

To be completed, in advance of the activity trip, by teacher responsible for the activity.

- Is the location of the activity trip indoors or outdoors? (I or O)
- Are special clothing needs such as shoes, jackets, or gloves required?
- Does the trip location include exposure to insect or animal bites, falling rocks, puncture wounds from plants, or eye irritation from dust or other airborne particles?
- Does the trip require climbing above or below the ground floor? If so, are walkways well marked, do they include hand or guardrails, and are they maintained in good condition?
- Have extraordinary exposures been included on the activity Trip Permission Form to provide for an informed consent from parent or guardian?
- Are first aid services available at the trip location in the event of an injury or illness?
- Are food and water available at the trip location? If not, will students bring their own food and water? Are facilities available to safely store food and water?
- Has the travel route been planned in advance?
- Will transportation make stops traveling to or from the trip location? If so, have stops been planned to maintain student control and safety?
- Is adequate parking available for safe vehicle loading, unloading, parking, and turn around?
- Does the learning experience involve direct contact with plants or animals? If so, have students been questioned about potential allergic reaction?
- Is prior evidence of liability insurance protection required by the trip location owner to allow use of the facility or property?
- If trip includes residence at a camp facility, does the camp owner require proof of student accident insurance?
- If the trip includes a wilderness program, have special arrangements been made for emergency or medical evacuation?

The following information is provided in the Arizona School Risk Retention Trust, Inc.'s Medication Administration Manual. It is essential that school administration and staff have a policy regarding the proper administration of medication during field trips.

The school will inform health office personnel of any upcoming field trips.

The principal or designee will identify the staff member who will administer medication during the trip. Health office personnel will then determine the medication needs of any trip participant.

A copy of school medication documentation forms should accompany the staff member who will be responsible for the administration of the medication. The forms can be obtained from the health office prior to leaving on the field trip.

Medications must be packaged in their original container and should be placed in a locked box or locked carrying case. No refrigerated medications will be provided unless the parent/guardian provides a properly insulated container that can be locked.

Upon return to school the staff member(s) will return all unused medications to the health office and will document all medication records accordingly.

Student Permission Slip

Pima School District #6

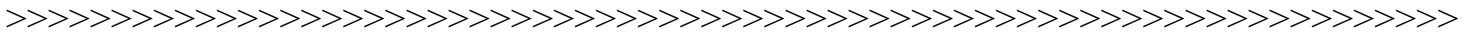
_____ is planning to attend the _____
in _____ on _____.

Transportation will be by _____.(Student drivers not permitted)

We will depart from the _____ at _____ and return by _____.

Sponsor Signature _____ Date _____

Additional information about the trip may be attached.



This permission slip must be signed and returned **BEFORE** your student can participate in this event.

My student _____ has my permission to attend the above event and I assume all responsibility for them (including medical costs), while attending this event.

I hereby grant unto any medical doctor or hospital my consent and authorization to render such aid, treatment or care to my student as, in the judgment of said doctor or hospital may be required, on an emergency basis, in the event my student should be injured, or stricken ill while participating in this school-sponsored event.

I certify we have Medical and Hospital Insurance to cover my student. Below is my student-sponsored event.

Name of Company _____ Policy # _____

Address of Company _____ Group# _____

Family Doctor _____ Phone# _____ Location _____

Name of Parent/Guardian _____ Phone# _____

In an emergency if parent cannot be contacted, notify _____ at _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Witness Signature _____ Date _____