

SMITH COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Coach/Chaperone Guidelines for Day and Overnight Field Trips

Under Tennessee law, all school volunteers must meet certain requirements, including those who volunteer in extra-curricular activities. Therefore, ALL coaches/chaperones of overnight trips must be approved by the principal to ensure the safety of our students and staff, and for compliance with the law. An individual seeking to volunteer must submit an application to the Board of Education. In a continuing effort to further ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff, the district shall require criminal history records checks and fingerprinting of individuals seeking to volunteer as well as a pre-activity drug screen.

Coaches/Chaperones must be:

- Smith County School District employees; or
- Any other adult approved by the Principal, School Administrator, Coach, and Director of Schools who meets all eligibility requirements to volunteer before the trip is scheduled for departure.

The primary reason for coaches/chaperones is to supervise a group of students. Coaches/chaperones are responsible for students and expected to stay with their assigned group and monitor behavior for the entire trip from departure time until they return to the school or another agreed upon location. Coaches/chaperones are responsible for enforcing the Student Code of Conduct and other relevant school policies. Coaches/chaperones must adhere to established basic guidelines for school-sponsored functions and additional guidelines, as may be developed by the individual teams. Coaches/chaperones are responsible for attending any designated information or procedural meeting prior to and during the trip as are required by the Principal, School Administrator, Coach, or Director of Schools.

Chaperone Eligibility and Required Documentation:

- All coaches/chaperones must be 18 years or older.
- Volunteer coaches/chaperones who are parents/guardians wishing to attend overnight or out-of-state must have all the required background checks and clearances in accordance with the Smith County School District Volunteer Policy
- Coaches/Chaperones must be registered as a district volunteer

Guidelines for Volunteer coaches/chaperones

Prior to the trip, the Principal, School Administrator, or Coach will provide information regarding the activities planned for the trip, expectations for supervising students, and emergency procedures. In addition, the following general guidelines will help volunteer coaches/chaperones effectively perform the duties as a coach/chaperone. Questions regarding these guidelines should be directed to the Principal, School Administrator, or Coach.

1. The ratio of students to coaches/chaperones shall be no greater than ten (10) to one (1).
2. Sensitive information that coaches/chaperones may learn about a student's abilities, relationships, or background must be kept confidential.
3. Coaches/Chaperones must be aware that some students have photo and media restrictions; this means that their parents/guardians have formally requested that they not be photographed at school or school activities. Do not post photos of students on your personal social media.
4. All school rules apply on school-sponsored field trips. Coaches/Chaperones are expected to comply with school policies, follow the directions given by the Principal, School Administrator, Coach, or Director of Schools, work cooperatively with other volunteers and school staff members, and model appropriate behaviors for students. The coach/chaperone will follow the developed trip plan.
5. Coaches/Chaperones are expected to be familiar with the corresponding Student Handbook. Any violations of school rules and/or district regulations shall be reported to the School Administrator immediately. All discipline issues will be handled by the School Administrator or other school representative.
6. The authority of coaches/chaperones is limited to general supervision of students, guidance and assistance of students in demonstrating safe and acceptable behavior. If a student fails to demonstrate acceptable student behavior (see Student Code of Conduct), the coach/chaperone should contact the Principal, School Administrator, or Coach.
7. Students must be supervised at all times while attending any event. Coaches/Chaperones will be expected to account for all students prior to departure, during transitions, and throughout an event.
8. Coaches/Chaperones should review rules and standards of behavior, safety rules and site specific rules with students. Students should not get involved in any activity(ies) that have not been approved by the Principal, School Administrator, or Coach.
9. For the protection of the both the student and the coach/chaperone, coaches/chaperones should not place themselves in situations in which they are alone with a student.
10. Coaches/Chaperones should be on time for designated meeting places and departures.
11. Coaches/Chaperones are responsible for maintaining emergency contact and medical information for participating students and must keep this information secure and readily available.
12. Medial release waivers for each student should be carried on all field trips. In case of an accident, the medial release waivers shall be presented to the treating physician. A student's permission slip shall be attached to the school's student injury report which is required when an accident occurs.
13. Coaches/Chaperones are required to report any illness of a student to the School Administrator or Coach immediately; and
14. In accordance with school policy, before or during the field trip, chaperones:
 - a. May not use or possess alcohol or other drugs;
 - b. May not use tobacco in the presence of or within the sight of students; and
 - c. May not administer any medications, prescription or non-prescription, to students without written parental/guardian consent.

Overnight Trips

Responsibilities of overnight trips are the same as those previously outlined, but include the following:

1. Coaches/Chaperones must attend a detailed briefing prior to the trip;
2. Coaches/Chaperones must assume 24-hour responsibility for students from the time they leave the district until the time they released to their parents/guardians.
3. Coaches/Chaperones will be assigned responsibility for a specific room(s) and/or floor area within the designated lodging area (i.e., hotel, motel, camp ground, etc.). Gender of the group members shall be considered when making lodging assignments.
4. Coaches/Chaperones may not retire until all student are in their rooms, all visiting between rooms has ceased, and the coaches/chaperones are certain that students are secure and safe in their respective rooms.
5. No coach/chaperone may sleep/lodge in a room with a student unless the chaperone is the student's parent or legal guardian.
6. Students are not permitted to have visitors who are not a member of the district-sponsored group. Students must be in their assigned rooms from the time that curfew begins until his/her chaperone permits them to move about.
7. Coaches/Chaperones should not bathe or be in a state of undress with students under any circumstances.
8. Coaches/Chaperones will be housed in the most efficient manner as possible.

Parent/Guardian Consent and Medical Release Forms

Prior to a scheduled trip, it will be the responsibility of the supervising School Administrator to have signed parent/guardian permission forms and medical release forms on file in the school office for all participating students along with the name and contact information of the Principal, School Administrator or Coach or Sponsoring Employee supervising the trip. The departure time and expected return time must be clearly stated on the permission form and conveyed to students, parents and school administration.

Coach/Chaperone Acknowledgement

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received the “Coach/Chaperone Guidelines for Day and Overnight Trips”, have read these guidelines, and agree to comply with the guidelines, I have read, understand, and accept all the responsibilities and duties as a coach/chaperone.

Trip Details – Club/Sport, Location, etc.

Trip Dates

Coach/Chaperone

Name Signature

Date Phone Number

Principal/Supervisor

Name Signature

Date Phone Number