new york city COMMUNITY schools

Field Trip Guide for CBOs

Field trips have the power to help students make real-world connections to their learning and memories that last a lifetime. As the Chancellor addressed, “extending learning beyond the four walls of the classroom feeds the souls of our children.” This guide serves as a jumping off point to assist in planning field trip destinations near you, drafting high-quality lesson plans, and navigating operational logistics.

Please note according to NYPS Chancellor’s regulation A 670 on Field Trips sets forth the policy and procedures governing school trips. A school trip is defined as any authorized field trip off school premises, regardless of the destination or method of transportation used. All building administrators and staff should familiarize themselves with this regulation to ensure that school trips will be productive, enjoyable, and safe experiences for students, parents, and staff.

OVERVIEW

Field trips that are fully or partially funded from the community school budget need pre-approval by the OCS Program Manager (PM). Below are resources for lead CBOs planning a field trip and information on the pre-approval process. Please also refer to the guidance in the OCS Fiscal Manual that is relevant to your funding source.

FIELD TRIP IDEAS

You can find OCS’ Field Trip Destination Ideas repository here. This is a collection of high quality field trip destinations sortable by borough, audience, or topic. This list is meant to be a sampling, and by no means exhaustive nor an endorsement of any particular location. If you are excited about additional destinations and would like to add on to the list, please email your (PM).

LOGISTICS

When requesting a field trip from your PM, please send the date, location, number of students/chaperones, cost breakdown, and lesson plan justifying the trip using this template: OCS Field Trip Pre-Approval Request Form. You can download a copy, fill in all information, and return to your PM via email before any field trip occurs. Below is a

timeline for how far in advance you should request approval, and the goal turnaround time:

Trip Type:	Request Approval By:	PM Review Timeline Goal:
Local Trips	≥ 4 weeks before trip date	≤ 1 week
Out of Town or Multi-Day Trips	≥ 8 weeks before trip date	≤ 2 weeks

Note: If you do not request prior approval, the expenses may not be reimbursed.

TRANSPORTATION

When organizing transportation, you can use subways, buses, and/or private authorized buses that comply with all federal, state, city, and NYC Public Schools rules and regulations for the transport of students. You can secure a yellow bus or coach bus company through your CBO or the NYC Public Schools' Online Field Trip System. See Transportation Resources and a list of yellow Bus Companies for additional guidance. See the Field Trips page for a list of available coach buses.

LESSON PLANS

Every field trip requires a lesson plan. A high quality lesson plan starts with a learning objective aligned with your academic and/or SEL standards. Include activities for students to engage in before, during, and after the field trip. These activities should represent the real world application of your curricular lessons. See this OCS Lesson Plan Folder for samples, as well as this Field Trip Directory Lesson Plans page.

FAQs

Why was my field trip not approved by my Program Manager?
Sometimes PMs may not approve a field trip request. This can be due to the nature of the trip lacking educational and/or SEL components, the cost not aligning with budgetary goals, the lesson plan being too surface level and/or not including student activities before, during, and after the trip, among other reasons. See the Lesson Plans section of this guide for additional support.

What do I need to send to my Program Manager to get a field trip approved?
Complete all sections of the OCS Field Trip Pre-Approval Request Form far in advance of your field trip date. This is at least one month for local field trips, and two months for out-of-town or multi-day field trips.

What forms are required by each entity?

Your school may require additional forms for field trips, which you can access on the NYC Public Schools' School Trips page. However, the only form you need to send to your PM is the OCS Field Trip Pre-Approval Request Form.

What else should I keep in mind for a field trip?
See NYC Public Schools' FAQs Regarding School Trips for additional guidance.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

View these websites for NYC field trip resources.

NYC Public Schools' Field Trip Resources:

- Bus Companies
- Chancellor's Regulation A-670
- FAQs Regarding School Trips
- Field Trips
- NYC Public Schools Field Trip Forms
- Online Field Trip System
- School Trips
- Transportation Resources

Office of Community Schools' Field Trip Resources:

- OCS Field Trip Pre-Approval Request Form
- OCS Lesson Plan Folder
- Office of Community Schools website

Other Resources:

- Field Trip Directory Lesson Plans