
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

Bill No: AB 341 **Hearing Date:** June 14, 2017
Author: Frazier
Version: February 7, 2017
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** No
Consultant: Ian Johnson

Subject: School field trips: expenses

SUMMARY

This bill authorizes school district funds to be used to cover the expenses of pupils participating in field trips or excursions to other states, the District of Columbia, or a foreign country.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Prohibits the assessment of student fees for participation in an educational activity in public K-12 schools.
- 2) Authorizes the governing board of a school district or the county superintendent of schools of a county to:
 - a) Conduct field trips or excursions to and from places in the state, any other state, the District of Columbia, or a foreign country for students enrolled in elementary or secondary schools, and transport students and staff for this purpose, provided that the governing board secures liability insurance for this purpose.
 - b) Engage instructors, supervisors, and other personnel to contribute their services over and above the normal period for which they are employed by the district, if necessary, and provide equipment and supplies for the field trip or excursion.
 - c) Provide supervision of students involved in field trips or excursions by certificated employees of the district.
- 3) Prohibits a student from being prevented from taking a field trip or excursion because of lack of sufficient funds.
- 4) Requires governing boards to coordinate efforts of community service groups to supply funds for students in need.
- 5) Prohibits a group from being authorized to take a field trip or excursion if a student who is a member of an identifiable group will be excluded from participation in the field trip or excursion because of lack of sufficient funds.

- 6) Prohibits expenses of students participating in a field trip or excursion to another state, the District of Columbia, or a foreign country from being paid for with school district funds.
- 7) States that expenses of instructors, chaperones, and other personnel participating in a field trip or excursion authorized by this section may be paid from school district funds and the school district may pay from school district funds all incidental expenses for the use of school district equipment during a field trip or excursion.
- 8) Prohibits the Superintendent of Public Instruction from providing transportation allowances for field trips or excursions that have an out-of-state destination.

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Removes the prohibition on school district funds being used to cover the expenses of students participating in a field trip or excursion to another state, the District of Columbia, or a foreign country.
- 2) Removes the authorization for expenses of instructors, chaperones, and other personnel participating in a field trip or excursion to another state, the District of Columbia, or a foreign country to be paid from school district funds, and the authorization to use school district funds for all incidental expenses for the use of school district equipment during the field trip or excursion.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** The author states that “According to a study conducted by the Wagner Group and the U.S. Travel Association, students that have partaken in educational travel have benefited both academically and financially. Findings of the study include:
 - 57% of students who participated in educational travel attained a college degree or continued post-graduate work compared to just 33% of those who did not participate in educational travel.
 - 59% of those who take educational trips achieve better grades.
 - Students who travel on educational trips in their youth earn nearly 12% more (or \$5,000) annually later in their careers than those who do not travel.

Current law prohibits a pupil enrolled in a public school from paying fees for participation in educational activities.

This bill will provide school districts with the discretion to pay for out-of-state travel where appropriate which will increase student access to educational

opportunities and improve the outcomes that students experience, leading to more successful careers and a better quality of life.”

- 2) ***Local control over district funds?*** In 2013, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) was enacted. The LCFF establishes per-pupil funding targets, with adjustments for different student grade levels, and includes supplemental funding for local educational agencies serving students who are low-income, English learners, or foster youth. The LCFF replaced almost all sources of state funding for local educational agencies, including most categorical programs, with general purpose funding including few spending restrictions.

While many of the spending restrictions associated with former categorical programs went away when the LCFF was adopted, the Education Code continues to include various restrictions on how school districts can design and fund certain services. School districts wishing to cover field trip expenses with district funds must apply for a waiver from the State Board of Education. The committee should consider whether it is necessary to restrict how school districts fund pupil costs related to field trips, given the flexibility provided by the LCFF and the need for school districts to have the ability to design programs that best meet their local needs.

SUPPORT

California Coalition of Travel Organizations
California School Boards Association
Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District (sponsor)

OPPOSITION

None received

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