

Glassboro Public Schools



MEMO

To: Dr. Mark Silverstein, Superintendent of Schools

From: Craig Stephenson, Chief Academic Officer

Date: February 10, 2025

Re: Action Memo
February 19, 2025 Board Meeting

Request board approval of the NJEA HIPP Grant application for school year 2024-2025. The teachers applying for the grant are Vanessa Poggioli, Shannon Batten, Kimberly DiMeo, Tyler Monaco, Jordan Hess, Allison Deschler, and Matt Schwarz. This grant would help provide students with opportunities to explore and understand the world around them. The program includes six field trips, to be held on Saturdays, for 8th graders. Each student would attend at least two trips. Prior to the trip, students will explore the museum or location online to prepare for what they will see. After the trip, students will present their experience to their peers during Study Skills.

The trips would include: Penn Museum, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Wheaton Village, Whitesbog, Bayshore Center at Bivalve and Grounds for Sculpture. Alternative trips are: Cedar Run Nature Refuge, Battleship NJ, The Funny Farm Animal Refuge, and Batsto Historic Site.

The teachers have two main goals: to expose students to a variety of experiences and to use the program to involve disengaged students in extra-curricular activities.

Parent permission slips and waivers will be submitted.

See attachment.

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

February 6th, 2025

Dear Members of the Board,

We are applying for an NJEA HIPP Grant to help provide our students with more opportunities to explore and understand the world around them. The program includes 6 field trips, to be held on Saturdays, for 8th graders. Each student would attend at least 2 trips. Prior to the trip, students will explore the museum or location online to prepare for what they will see. After the trip, students will present their experience to their peers during Study Skills. Our complete application is attached.

In the grant application, we are not allowed to name specific things about our district that might identify our school. For that reason, we had to be vague about the trips. We have budgeted for a hands-on workshop or program at almost all of the sites.

Our itinerary for the trips is:

- January: Penn Museum
- February: Philadelphia Museum of Art
- March: Wheaton Village
- April: Whitesbog (Pine Barrens)
- May: Bayshore Center at Bivalve
- June: Grounds for Sculpture

Alternative trips: Cedar Run Nature Refuge, Battleship NJ, The Funny Farm Animal Refuge, Batsto Historic Site

The budget for the grant has costs for contracting with Holcomb for the buses and paying for an instructional aide and nurse for each one.

In an ideal world, we are hoping to combine savings on some of these items with additional funds through the Glassboro Education Foundation, the PTO, the Community Foundation of NJ, or fundraising. This would allow us to take a March trip to the Smithsonian Museum of African American History or the Holocaust Museum in Washington DC and/or an April trip to the 9/11 Museum or Ellis Island. We obtained quotes from multiple coach bus companies and Hillman was the most reasonable for these longer trips.

Some potential places for savings include using district buses for a reduced rate or the district covering some of the instructional aide stipends. We also may not need a nurse or aide on every trip depending on which students apply to the program. Rather than rely on potential items, we have budgeted for them and will adjust as necessary if we are awarded the grant.

Ideally, we would have 3 staff and 2 family chaperones per trip. Given that many of our target families do not have transportation, we would prefer to take them on the bus. Can

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

you clarify if chaperones need a background check or they cannot ride because of a prohibition with our bus insurance? We are budgeting for the background checks in case it's necessary but would change that to add more students to some of the trips if they are not needed.

The grant is due on March 6th so we appreciate any feedback that you may have.

Thank you,

Vanessa Poggioli, Shannon Batten, Kimberly DiMeo, Tyler Monaco, Jordan Hess, Allison Deschler, and Matt Schwarz

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

Application:

Project Coordinator:

Vanessa Poggioli

Project Team Members:

Allison Deschler, Jordan Hess, Kimberly DiMeo, Matthew Schwarz, Shannon Batten, Tyler Monaco

1a. Target Population

Do NOT include any reference or abbreviation that would allow for the identification of any individual, school, district, college, local association, or county. Inclusion of any of the above will result in an automatic disqualification of the application. Describe the population of students your project targets (e.g., how many students, what age, grade level, etc. within the school building/district/college.)

The target population for The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students Perspectives Through Field Trips is approximately 130 8th grade students in one suburban middle school. Once students complete their trip, participating students will share their experiences with their peers during the school day. The program will also include family members of the students involved who act as chaperones.

Approximately 42% of students at the school were classified as economically disadvantaged during the 2022-2023 school year and 21% were students with a disability. Approximately 7% of students were multilingual learners. As of 2022-2023, 33% of students were White, 26% were Hispanic, 29% were Black or African American, 3% were Asian, and 8% identified as two or more races.

1b. Community Description

Do NOT include any reference or abbreviation that would allow for the identification of any individual, school, district, college, local association, town, or county. It is also important not to identify the geographic location of the school (i.e., south/central/north Jersey, shore community, Pinelands, close to Philadelphia/New York, etc.)

Include a short description of where the school/college is located – its size, demographics. Include statistical information about the community in which your school/district/college is located. i.e., size, social, racial, and economic factors; urban, suburban, rural designation, or other relevant information. Use sources such as

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

census.gov, the New Jersey Department of Education, and others.

Do NOT specifically name the school, district, college, town, or county. Inclusion of any of the previous will result in an automatic disqualification of the application.

According to the 2023 census, the middle school is located in a 9.221 square mile suburban town of approximately 23,000 residents. Approximately 1,950 students attend four schools in grades PK-12; distributed among two elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. The population is approximately 66% Caucasian, 18% Black or African American, 10% Hispanic or Latino, 6% Asian, 6% other, and 4% two or more races. Approximately 20.9% of the community is living below the poverty line. The district's schools are all under Title I and approximately 43% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

1c. Special Factors

Do NOT include any reference or abbreviation that would allow for the identification of any individual, school, district, college, local association, town, or county. Inclusion of any of the previous will result in an automatic disqualification of the application.

Does the project address multicultural issues or diversity (i.e., ethnic cultures; religious; sexual orientation; special needs; multi-grade classrooms; intergenerational projects?)

Ethnic Cultures:

As we visit different museums and cultural sites, we will ensure that artists, artifacts, exhibits, and activities are chosen with the understanding that our students come from a variety of cultures and backgrounds. It is vital to uplift the stories, people, and objects that may not be central to our curriculum or represented in the media. If we are able to find additional sponsors and funds, we hope to take students to either the National Museum of African American History or the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC.

Religious Factors:

We have a small but growing population of students who identify as Muslim. In our student activities survey and during academic intervention meetings, students expressed the desire for us to make our school more inclusive for those who practice

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

Islam. Two of our trips include visits to museums that have significant collections of art and artifacts from the Middle East. We intend to ensure that all students who participate gain direct access to art and artifacts in a setting that celebrates the contributions of the Islamic culture.

Multilingual Learners:

It has been one of our goals in the past two years to ensure that barriers are removed for our MLLs and families whose home language is not English. To ensure that students whose home language is not English, we will be translating all materials. To encourage MLLs to join the program, we will specifically reach out to those students to apply. We are working with our ESL teacher on this endeavor.

Diverse Family Needs:

We recognize that some families have limited access to disposable income, leisure time, and transportation. Offering field trips can provide equitable access to enriching learning opportunities outside of the classroom and school.

Students with Special Needs:

The program's goal is to open up experiences to students who might not otherwise have access to them. For this reason, we have budgeted for the nurse and a paraprofessional for each trip. This would allow us to bring students with disabilities that require additional support as well as those with more significant medical needs. Incorporating learning goals from Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) can provide opportunities to reach these goals in nontraditional settings and gives students with disabilities equal opportunities to access the community where the trips will be taken.

1d. Needs Assessment

Do NOT include any reference or abbreviation that would allow for the identification of any individual, school, district, college, local association, or county. Inclusion of any of the previous will result in an automatic disqualification of the application.

Briefly describe the need for the project in your school, district, or college and community. State any specific problem being addressed by the proposed project and what has been done to date to assist the target student population.

Cite specific data or other measurable information that justifies the need for the project.

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

Exposure:

We must expand our students' horizons for many reasons. Academically, expanded knowledge of the world leads to stronger reading comprehension (Shen, 2008). Our transition to the Wit & Wisdom curriculum for ELA has helped students develop schema and make connections between their background knowledge and the work. Still, only 41% of 8th grade students met or exceeded proficiency on the 2023 NJSLA. Among economically disadvantaged students, those that have a disability, or are English language learners, the rate of proficiency is even lower.

In terms of equity, there is a divide between what some of our families can offer their children and what others can provide concerning going to museums, traveling, or having many diverse experiences. Time and money are two resources families have in differing amounts. Our district is also located in an area with little public transportation. While three New Jersey Transit bus routes cross the town, it takes over an hour to get to the nearest city or state forest.

Engagement:

Our school transitioned from an elementary school, serving grades 4-6 to a middle school, serving grades 6-8 during the 2021-2022 school year. As such, we expanded our extracurricular offerings to include more sports and clubs. From 2022-2023 to 2023-2024, we increased total participation in extracurricular activities by 6%. However, this did not increase the number of individual students participating. A survey done in the Spring of 24 showed that 102/169 or 60% of students do not participate in any school activity and 77/169 or 46% do not participate in activities in or outside of school

One of our schoolwide goals for the 2022-2023 school year was to improve outcomes for our multilingual learners. By starting an after-school bilingual math program, recognizing ELLs at our People's Choice Awards, and encouraging individual students to join clubs, we had fewer MLLs failing classes by the end of the 2023-2024 school year.

We have also worked to help students engage with their futures, by starting a weekly career speaker series for 8th graders. So far, 18 speakers have shared their journeys including doctors, scientists, mechanics, veterans, a cosmetologist, a Peace Corps volunteer, and an IT specialist. In addition, students have worked on resumes in their business class and have envisioned their future during our character lessons.

Grant Amount Requested	Project Start Date	Project End Date
IMPORTANT! The Grant Amount requested below	Do not start before July 1	Conclude by July 31 of the

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

must be equal to the specific project expenses detailed in Section 6 - Budget. Please round up to the nearest whole dollar between \$1,000 - \$10,000.		following year.
10,000	August 1st, 2026	June 20th, 2026

Section 2 - OBJECTIVES

Do NOT include any reference or abbreviation that would allow for the identification of any individual, school, district, college, local association, town, or county. Inclusion of any of the previous will result in an automatic disqualification of the application.

List the specific objectives you plan to accomplish in measurable terms. The project's focus is to underwrite programs and materials that are outside of what is a standard expectation of what the district/college can provide.

The Objectives must match your Needs Assessment and present a clear connection between what you hope to achieve and how you hope to achieve it.

We have two main goals: to expose students to a variety of experiences and to use the program to involve disengaged students in extracurricular activities.

Exposure:

- Students visit off-campus institutions that increase their understanding of the world.
- Students have access to primary sources and learn about a variety of cultural and historical topics.
- Students make connections with instruction in history, science, and art and elements outside of the classroom.
- Students demonstrate effective communication skills by presenting information to peers.
- Students increase their understanding of local geography by exploring areas outside of the school district.

Engagement:

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

- We will reduce the number of disengaged students i.e. those who do not participate in co-curricular or extracurricular activities, especially MLLs and students with IEPs

Section 3 - PROJECT PLAN

Do NOT include any reference or abbreviation that would allow for the identification of any individual, school, district, college, local association, or county. Inclusion of any of the previous will result in an automatic disqualification of the application.

- *The project should be innovative, creative, and exploratory by nature.*
- *Identify and explain the activities you propose to undertake and describe how they fulfill the project's objectives.*
- *Explain how you will collaborate with others in the school and community in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the project.*
- *Describe any professional development or collegial experiences that may be required to complete the project.*
- *Explain how the project will be continued in the future, indicating any potential school and community collaborations, contributions, and funds. Applicants are encouraged to seek additional funding sources, such as the local education association, school system, college or university, community organizations, and businesses. Please generally describe them, i.e. "PTO" or "Pizza Parlor" as necessary. DO NOT LIST ANY NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS/ BUSINESSES OR IDENTIFY THE LOCATION OF LOCAL BUSINESSES.*
- *Explain how this project can be replicated or adapted by others.*
- *If this is a continuation grant, be sure to illustrate how the continuation project builds on the original grant, and how it will be continued after a second year of funding is over.*

Our students are inquisitive about the world but many rarely leave our county. Through a NJEA HIPP Grant, students would have the opportunity to access amazing institutions that exist within three hours of our school through a series of field trips and workshops.

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

The program would include one field trip per month in the spring of 2026. Each student in the program could attend two of the six trips, as some locations can accommodate 50 students and others can only accommodate 30. Approximately 120 students would be able to participate in the program. The trips would be on Saturdays, to avoid any issues with substitutes and missing instruction.

In the spring of 2026, teachers and community members would chaperone one field trip per month. Before the field trip, students attending that trip would stay after school to explore the collection of the museum or research what they were going to see. The district will provide space and transportation for students during the after-school workshops and we will be partnering with other teachers at our school to act as chaperones on the trip. The trip preparation will include the norms for the place that we are visiting as well as an individual student plan for what they hope to see and experience.

Our tentative schedule of trips includes an indoor art museum, an outdoor sculpture museum, a history museum with ancient artifacts, a craft workshop, a state forest, and a floating museum dedicated to fishing and biology. Almost all of the experiences include a hands-on component at the institution. For those that do not, we will complete one at school to improve retention and appeal to different learning styles.

To encourage family members to join us as chaperones while taking as many students as possible, the grant will reimburse five community members for the required New Jersey background check. Students in the program will receive a t-shirt to help identify us during the trips as well as a journal to record their impressions, questions, and new knowledge. After the trip, students will create a short presentation to share their experiences with other students during our Study Skills block. These presentations will have a rubric and guidelines that encourage students to connect with what they saw and what they learned in school.

To make the program more equitable, we will ensure that students with special needs or medical needs have their requirements met and can attend the trips. We intend to identify students who are not involved in other programs through our fall student activities survey and individually encourage them to apply to the program. In our selection rubric, we will prioritize students who are not involved in other activities. We will translate materials into home languages and reach out to families directly to make the program more accessible for our English language learners and students with special needs.

After the grant period, the Saturday field trip model will shift to a funding model based on grants that will include, but are not limited to, our local education foundation and HIPP continuation grant. We may also be able to apply for an NJEA PEP grant, contingent on the inclusion of families and siblings with our students. We would also work with our PTO on fundraising or seek sponsorships with local businesses. We are hoping to partner with a nearby research university to provide other ways for our

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

students to access resources. Through this system, we will connect our students to the wider world as well as provide a model for others to plan additional trips.

Section 4 - TIMELINE

Do NOT include any reference or abbreviation that would allow for the identification of any individual, school, district, college, local association, town, or county. Inclusion of any of the above will result in an automatic disqualification of the application.

Explain your timeline for the project in detail. Demonstrate reasonable expectations for accomplishing your project objectives. Timeline must begin no sooner than July 1 and conclude no later than June 30 of the following year. Provide sufficient detail to demonstrate project implementation

August 2025:

-Application materials are created, including a rubric for student selection

September 2025:

-Field trip dates are finalized and buses are secured for longer trips.

-The program is mentioned at Back to School Night

-Fall activities survey is given and disengaged students are identified

October 2025:

-The program is rolled out to students and families with emails, SchoolMessenger notifications, and on social media.

-Application materials are made available.

-A teacher from the grant team reaches out to disengaged students to encourage them to apply and offers to assist with the applications

November 2025:

-Applications are reviewed by the committee

-Students are chosen for the program based on a rubric

-T-shirts and notebooks are ordered

-Students are notified of their acceptance to the program

December 2025:

-Students list trips in order of preference

-Trip lists are created

-January trip is finalized

-Students attend training session on field trip norms

January 2026:

-First trip is taken

-Students present to classmates upon return and complete reflection

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

-February trip is finalized

February 2026

-Second trip is taken

-Students present to classmates upon return and complete reflection

-March trip is finalized

March 2026

-Third trip is taken

-Students present to classmates upon return and complete reflection

-April trip is finalized

April 2026

-Fourth trip is taken

-Students present to classmates upon return and complete reflection

-May trip is finalized

May 2026

-Fifth trip is taken

-Students present to classmates upon return and complete reflection

-June trip is finalized

-Spring student activity survey is given

June 2026

-Sixth trip is taken

-Students present to classmates upon return and complete reflection

-Program is evaluated using data from student presentations, journals, school-wide activity participation data, and student/family surveys.

Section 5 - ASSESSMENT

Do NOT include any reference or abbreviation that would allow for the identification of any individual, school, district, college, local association, town, or county. Inclusion of any of the previous will result in an automatic disqualification of the application.

*Show how you will measure the success of your project. You must use measurable criteria such as meeting logs, journal entries, rubrics, test scores, or any other scientifically based measurements. *Surveys are not an assessment.*

Exposure:

Students will demonstrate their exposure to new experiences and the connections they make between the things they see and their in-school learning in their presentations to peers.

Students will demonstrate their improved understanding of geography in a quiz on

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

Schoolology taken two weeks after each trip.

Engagement:

We will use the spring student activities data from 2026 to determine whether a larger percentage of individual students are involved in extracurricular activities as compared to the data from spring of 2025.

Section 6 - BUDGET

Do NOT include any reference or abbreviation that would allow for the identification of any individual, school, district, college, local association, town, or county. Inclusion of any of the above will result in an automatic disqualification of the application.

- Provide a specific line-item budget detailing project expenses, such as release time, supplies, printing, etc.
- Your budget needs to directly connect your needs assessment, objectives, and your project plan.
- If you have additional funding sources, please generally describe them, i.e., "PTO" or "Local Pizza Parlor." DO NOT NAME ANY SPECIFIC INFORMATION.
- If you are requesting stipends, they must align with your district's negotiated contracts.

IMPORTANT! The total of the specific expenses detailed below must equal your Grant Amount Requested in *Section 1 - Project Summary*. Please round up to the nearest whole dollar between \$1,000 - \$10,000

	Total	\$10,000.00
Trip 1: Museum of Antiquities- 1/17/26		\$1,658.00
Bus		\$560.00

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

Admission/Workshop \$22 x 35 students	\$770.00
Chaperones x 5	\$0.00
Nurse	\$200.00
Para Professional	\$128.00
Trip 2: Art Museum - 2/28/26	\$888.00
Bus	\$560.00
Admission for 45 students x \$0	\$0.00
Admission for 5 chaperones x \$0 for Title I	\$0.00
Nurse	\$200.00
Para Professional	\$128.00
Trip 3- Visit to Crafts Museum- 3/21/26	\$1,363.00
Bus	\$675.00
Admission and workshop \$12 x 30 students	\$360.00
Chaperones x 5	\$0.00
Nurse	\$200.00
Para Professional	\$128.00
Trip 4- Visit to Nature Preserve- 4/18/26	\$1,488.00
Bus	\$560.00
Tour \$15 x 40 students	\$600.00
Chaperones x 5	\$0.00
Nurse	\$200.00
Para Professional	\$128.00
Trip 5 - Floating Classroom - 5/9/26	\$2,570.00
Bus	\$742.00
Boat tour and museum visit (45 students, 5	\$1,500.00

The Magic School Bus: Expanding Students' Perspectives Through Field Trips

chaperones)	
Nurse	\$200.00
Para Professional	\$128.00
Trip 6 - Outdoor Art Museum	\$1,713.00
Bus	\$615.00
Admission & Workshop 35 students x \$22	\$770.00
Chaperones x 5	\$0.00
Nurse	\$200.00
Para Professional	\$128.00
Other	\$320.00
Background Checks \$80 x 4	\$320.00
Provided by District	\$0.00
Space for after-school training sessions	
Transportation for after-school training sessions	
Copies of flyers and printing needs	
Notebooks, pens, pencils for 120 students	
T-shirts for 120 students (Color Wars)	