

Tips for EdRising National Conference Chaperones

Taking students to a conference out of state can be an exciting and enriching experience. Contained in this document are some tips and checklists for all chaperones to consider for this important responsibility. They range from what you should do to prepare yourself and your fellow chaperones for the conference to what you should encourage your students to do on site. We have attempted to place these in chronological order, but there may be some overlap.



Pre-Conference Preparations for Chaperones

Step 1: Plan Conference Logistics

- Review the [Educators Rising Chaperone Agreement](#) to understand your role as a chaperone.
- Plan to secure all necessary permission slips and conduct forms well in advance for each student.
- Book hotel accommodations.
- Plan transportation to/from airport, hotel, and conference venue.
- Plan meals. One lunch and one breakfast are included with conference registration but everything else is on your own.



Step 2: Plan Conference Schedules and Attire

- Familiarize yourself with the conference schedule.
- Familiarize yourself (and your students) with the conference location (how to get to/from the hotel, the venue, and the airport, what restaurants are nearby, etc.).
- Familiarize yourself (and your students) with any special requirements or restrictions of the conference ([guidelines for recommended attire](#), for example).

Step 3: Prepare for Emergencies and Medical Needs

- Ensure all necessary paperwork, including consent forms, medical forms, and emergency contact information, is completed and easily accessible.
- Maintain a list of all students and their contact information:

- A secure digital record (in Google Sheets for access on the road).
- A printed copy in a Chaperone Binder listing all of the students' names and phone numbers, and their emergency contact info.
- Be aware of any dietary restrictions or medical needs among the students and make appropriate accommodations.
- Have a plan in place for addressing any medical emergencies that may arise. Ensure students know how to reach you or other chaperones in case of emergency.
- Make sure to note where and how EdRising staff members can be reached for any questions or emergencies that arise while at the conference.
- Make a plan for what will happen should one of your chaperones become sick and not be able to attend the conference or carry out duties while at the conference.

Step 4: Plan a Pre-Conference Meeting

- Hold a Pre-Conference Meeting with all students and chaperones. Pick a date (or two) and make the meeting(s) mandatory for anyone going on the trip so that you can ensure everyone is on the same page with all of the travel logistics of the trip, what to pack/not pack for the trip, the protocols while at conference, and the agenda of daily events.
- Collect information on the chaperones who will be going on the trip including every chaperone's name and mobile phone number. Compile this list to hand out at the Pre-Conference Meeting.
- Coordinate possibilities for meals not provided at conference. Google the surrounding restaurants and plan to set up reservations for dinner at area restaurants.
- Only meals included are the keynote lunch on June 21st and the awards breakfast on June 23rd; all other meals are on your own. There are several options to purchase food within the convention center.

Pre-Conference Meeting Checklist for Chaperones

- Begin your meeting by establishing clear guidelines and expectations for student behavior and safety during the trip. See [EdRising Conference Code of Conduct](#).
- Make sure all students and chaperones have the emergency contact forms filled out while at the meeting. Have them fill them out electronically so that you already have the info collected in an online format and can also print the data out.
- Gather digital and printed lists of all students and their contact information to have accessible on your trip:
 - A secure digital record (e.g., a spreadsheet in Google Sheets).
 - A printed copy in a Chaperone Binder listing all students' and chaperones' names, phone numbers, and emergency contact info.



Attire & Dress Code

- Discuss the competition dress code and how that may be more formal than the day-to-day wear for the rest of the conference.
- [Refer to the recommended guidelines for conference attire](#). During most of the conference it is recommended that attendees are in business casual; there are certain events that allow for different attire to show school or state spirit. Review the guidelines carefully. Encourage your students and chaperones to represent themselves in a polished and professional way – this is a professional networking event with the best and brightest current and future educators in our country.
- Call out the following items from the guidelines during in the meeting:
 - Namebadges must be worn at all times.
 - No shorts in the conference area.
 - Shoes are required at all times.
 - Business casual allows dark jeans if they have no holes in them.
- Tip: Share a slideshow of professional versus unprofessional attire options.

- Some groups like to coordinate matching shirts that they wear on certain days when they know they will all be out and about and need visual identifiers of their group members (even just having everyone agree to wear bright yellow one day or something like that).

What to Pack

- Personal identification. Attendees over 18, including students, will need a Real ID to fly. If any student does not have a Real ID, let students know to be prepared for the extra charges that the airport will assess.
- Professional attire.
- Business casual attire.
- Casual (but appropriate) attire for touring the city.
- No jeans with rips in them.
- Bathing suits for free time. Remind students that bathing suits must be fully covered when in the hotel.
- Phone chargers.
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, shampoo/conditioner, deodorant, make-up, hairspray, Q-tips, bandaids, etc.).
- Special items like retainers, nightguards, etc. and cleaning supplies for those items.
- Competition materials (thumb drive with presentation on it, upload presentation to a Google drive as a back-up, etc.).
- Snacks for travel bag.
- Empty water bottle to refill throughout travels (in airport, at conference, etc.).
- Toiletries for the community service donation box.
- Extra cash or credit card for EdRising store swag, souvenirs from Portland, soda machine purchases, etc.

Logistics & Group Coordination

- Make small signs or school flags for your chaperones to hold up at check-in locations within the conference venue or when out touring the Portland area as a group.
- Coordinate a plan with those students who are competing for how they will transport their materials (bulletin boards, for example) and secure their presentation slideshows online and on a flash drive.
- Assign small groups of students to each chaperone to ensure adequate supervision. Recommendation would be only 4–6 students per chaperone, but use your best judgment or follow your school's required ratio.
- Have students choose meal options in advance based on the pre-meeting research. Pick two or three restaurants and let students sign up for those reservations with their chaperones in advance of the trip. Then book enough chaperones to cover the amount of students that want to eat at each of those establishments (e.g., pizza place, hamburger joint, vegetarian options — then divide and conquer).

Getting to and Arriving at Conference

Step 1: Remind Students a Few Days Before

- Refer to your “Know Before You Go” email that comes out one week before the conference for the final checklist of reminders.
- Send a final email to remind students of things they will need to bring:
 - Their ID. It will be required for the flight. If the student does not have a Real ID, be prepared for the extra charges that the airport will assess.
 - Money to buy swag at the EdRising store.
 - Any items they will be donating.
 - Money for meals.
- Encourage students to pack lightly (carry-on only, if possible, to ensure ease of loading up the group into shuttles and not worrying about luggage getting lost on flights).



Step 2: Finalize Airport and Transportation Logistics

- Come up with a game plan for the airport transfers and getting to/from hotel and conference center.
- Most important reminder is to expect delays, so BE SUPER EARLY FOR ALL FLIGHTS. Plan to be at the airport for check-in at least two hours early – minimum!
- Have a chaperone on the ground in Portland ready to meet arriving students and other chaperones to get them to the hotel/conference center safely and without any confusion. This chaperone will already know where to go and what to do to get a taxi, train ticket, etc. to the hotel.

Step 3: Model Professionalism and Cultural Sensitivity

- Set a positive example for students by demonstrating professionalism and a respectful demeanor at all times.
- Encourage students to engage respectfully with presenters, organizers, and other attendees.
- Address any issues or conflicts promptly and discreetly.
- Respect the cultural norms and customs of the conference host location.
- Prepare students to be respectful and open-minded when interacting with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Use the opportunity to promote cultural awareness and understanding among students.

Conference Duties for Chaperones

1. Maintain Contact with Your Chaperone Group

- Maintain a visible presence and make sure all chaperones are available to the students in their group throughout the conference. Students should not be permitted to leave the hotel or convention center without a chaperone.
- Establish designated meeting points and times for students to check in with the whole group (or at least their assigned chaperone) throughout the conference. Regular check-ins are key!



2. Encourage Engagement and Enrichment

- Encourage students to actively participate in conference sessions, workshops, and activities. This is their time to really soak up all of the inspiration and knowledge from their peers and adult educator role models.
- Facilitate discussions and reflections to help students process and apply what they've learned.
- Provide opportunities for students to network with professionals in their particular areas of interest (classroom teachers, admins, counselors, etc.).

3. Ensure Health and Wellness

- Remind students to prioritize their health and well-being by getting enough rest, staying hydrated, and eating balanced meals.

4. Keep Open Communication

- Maintain open and clear communication with students, other chaperones, conference organizers, and school administrators.
- Keep students informed of any changes to the schedule or itinerary.
- Encourage students to share their thoughts, questions, and concerns with you throughout the trip.

5. Ensure Students Adhere to the Code of Conduct

- No Shenanigans (especially sexual shenanigans)! Shenanigans will get you thrown out of the conference immediately, and getting an early flight/ride home will be at your own expense. Don't test this!
- Refer to the Code of Conduct (part of the registration form) for more specifics on what is and isn't acceptable behavior at conference.