

# FIELD TRIPS

## Background

Valuable learning can occur outside the school site and believes there is educational value in well-planned and properly supervised field trips. Such experiences provide opportunities to enrich the curriculum and allow young people to develop their intellectual, social and physical capabilities. The District supports field trips as enhancements to students' educational experiences.

The District acknowledges the importance of protecting instructional time. Accordingly, field trips must be directly related to the educational mandate of the public school system and consideration is to be given as to whether the activity might more appropriately be undertaken in out-of-school time.

The District believes that the health, safety, and security of students and staff/parent chaperones and supervisors on such trips are of paramount importance. All necessary safety precautions must, therefore, be included in the planning effort and the highest standard of care applied during the activity.

## Procedures

1. All school field trips are governed by District Administrative Procedure 260 and may be approved only after giving due consideration to factors identified in this Administrative Procedure.
2. The Principal must, therefore, ensure that all school field trips are appropriately planned, authorized, organized and supervised.
3. Types of Field Trips and Approvals Required  
Field trips have been categorized into four (4) levels which reflect various risk factors (e.g. duration, location, age of students and nature of activity). The due diligence required, therefore, increases with the level of risk.

Copies of field trip documents and approvals are to be retained by the Principal in the school office for a period of two years.

### 3.1. Level 1 (Low Risk Day Trips)

School staff engage in a number of field trips that are routine in nature (e.g. neighborhood park, local museum, community centre, visiting another school, fire hall, city hall, swimming pool, skating rink). Typically, these trips are of one day or less in duration, take place within the District region, and are low risk in nature.

- 3.1.1. Procedure: The supervisor of the proposed field trip will need to complete [Form 260-1](#): Field Trip Approval form and submit the information to the Principal to obtain preliminary approval before communicating with parents, making commitments or beginning fundraising.

- 3.1.1.1. Background Information: Provide basic details of the proposed trip (e.g. Destination, Date, Grade, Students, Travel, Supervisor, Chaperones, Cost)
  - 3.1.1.2. Educational Rationale: Description of how the field trip will enrich the school program and curriculum; and
  - 3.1.1.3. Special Needs: Requirements of students with special needs to be considered to ensure they can be transported and participate in trip activities safely.
  - 3.1.2. Consent: [Form 260-2](#): Field Trip Activities Consent by Parent/Guardian and Acknowledgement of Risk form, must be obtained from the parent.
  - 3.1.3. Approval: Principal signature required on [Form 260-1](#): Field Trip Approval form.
- 3.2. Level 2 (Low Risk Overnight Trips – Up to 2 Nights in BC)
- Principals sanction trips that are longer in duration, require overnight accommodation, occur in the province of B.C. and do not involve any medium or high risk activities. A school sports team competing in a provincial tournament may extend beyond the 2 day maximum.
- 3.2.1. Procedure: Complete Level 1 and Level 2 on [Form 260-1](#): Field Trip Approval form which will include information regarding accommodations, trip itinerary, and supervision plans.
  - 3.2.2. Consent: [Form 260-2](#):Field Trip Activities Consent by Parent/Guardian and Acknowledgement of Risk form must be obtained.
  - 3.2.3. Approval: Principal signature required on [Form 260-1](#): Field Trip Approval Form.
- 3.3. Level 3 (Medium/High Risk Trips Or Trips More Than 2 Nights in BC)
- Level 3 field trips involve activities that are medium or high risk in nature and occur within British Columbia. Low risk trips for more than 2 nights - in British Columbia - are also considered Level 3 trips (with the exception of a school sports team competing in a provincial tournament).
- 3.3.1. Procedure: Seek initial approval for the trip from the Principal by submitting the information for Level 1 [Form 260-1](#): Field Trip Approval form. Following the preliminary approval, the trip supervisor completes the requirements outlined in Level 2 and the Level 3 Safety Procedure.
  - 3.3.2. Consent: [Form 260-2](#):Field Trip Activities Consent by Parent/Guardian and Acknowledgement of Risk form must be obtained
  - 3.3.3. Approval: Principal signature on [Form 260-1](#): Field Trip Approval form is required and the documents submitted to Superintendent for consideration and approval (2 months in advance of field trip).
- 3.4. Level 4 (Out-Of-Province or International Trips)
- For out of province trips or international trips, the trip supervisor must first seek initial approval from the Principal by submitting the information for Level 1 [Form 260-1](#): Field Trip Approval form.

Following the preliminary approval, the trip supervisor completes the requirements outlined in Levels 2 and 3 (including informed parental consent). As well, Level 4 trips must take into account some or all of the following issues (depending on the scope and nature of the activity).

- 3.4.1. Travel Advisories: The Government of Canada, through Foreign Affairs, issues travel bulletins warning of countries with travel safety concerns. Unless the Board approves such travel, students are not to travel to countries identified in such warnings.
- 3.4.2. Timing: Whenever possible, such trips are to be planned during holidays in order to minimize the number of instructional days lost.
- 3.4.3. Procedure: Trip organizers are expected to provide: an expanded educational rationale, communication plans, free time plans and fundraising information. Additionally, the organizers of international trips may be required to appear before the Board to review the educational merits of and safety plan for the trip.
- 3.4.4. Financial Risk: Funds deposited for travel may be at risk if travel plans require cancellation or postponement. The financial failure of a travel agency may also result in the loss of funds. Accordingly, travel arrangements shall be made with travel agents that allow trip postponement/cancellation in the event of a travel safety threat. Additionally, travel agents must be covered by the travel Assurance Fund recognized by a provincial or federal government agency.
  - 3.4.4.1. Reasonable precautions are to be taken with the payment of funds for student travel. Should payments for travel arrangements be lost due to the financial difficulties of travel agents or airlines, such losses will be the responsibility of a student's parents.
- 3.4.5. Commercial/Interest-Based Excursions: The District will not assume any responsibility for commercial or interest-based field trips or excursions that have not been approved or endorsed by the Board. This includes but is not limited to companies specializing in student travel, or for trips that provide an excursion for students based on common interest.
  - 3.4.5.1. Staff may, as individuals, participate in student package tours or interest-based excursions, provided that it is made clear to parents and students that the staff member is taking part on a personal basis and the school or the District is in no way involved.
  - 3.4.5.2. The Principal shall ensure that any advertising of or recruiting for these trips, which may occur within the school, must clearly indicate that there is no Board approval or endorsement of the excursion.
- 3.4.6. Approval: Principal signature on [Form 260-1: Field Trip Approval form](#) and submit to the Board (at least 6 months in advance of field trip) for consideration and approval in principle prior to any fundraising. It is also to be noted that the Board reserves the right to cancel a field trip when it be deemed (in the Board's opinion) to be necessary.

## 4. Supervision and Safety

### 4.1. Risk Assessment

4.1.1. A risk assessment must be conducted for all Level 3 or 4 field trips (see Appendix B - Safety Plan). In addition, downhill skiing and snowboarding excursions must be guided by the procedures outlined in Appendix A.

#### 4.2. Supervisory Roles

4.2.1. Trip Supervisor is responsible for:

4.2.1.1. Ensuring that the trip is properly planned, organized and authorized;

4.2.1.2. Exercising supervision on a full-time basis;

4.2.1.3. Making decisions with respect to the trip;

4.2.1.4. Taking whatever precautions are necessary to ensure the proper conduct, appropriate behaviour, and safety of students; and

4.2.1.5. Reporting to the Principal of any injuries or incidents which have or may threaten the health, safety or security of trip participants.

4.2.2. Chaperone(s): A chaperone may be a parent, staff or community member who is selected by the trip supervisor(s) to help achieve the goals of the trip and to help ensure the safety of the students. To accomplish this, a chaperone works under the direction of the trip supervisor(s).

#### 4.3. Supervision

Prior to the departure of a field trip, the Principal is expected to review with trip supervisors:

4.3.1. The expectations of supervisors and chaperones to provide appropriate supervision and to ensure proper and safe student conduct by being proactive and by providing a visible presence;

4.3.2. The level and type of supervision appropriate for the trip;

4.3.3. Supervision of students on a twenty-four (24) hours per day basis including sleep time and unscheduled time;

4.3.4. The type of behaviour that will be deemed inappropriate for students and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour (in view of the School Code of Conduct);

4.3.5. Expectations with respect to alcohol and illegal substances;

4.3.6. A critical incident plan to deal with health, financial, or discipline emergencies; and

4.3.7. Plans to make students aware of the procedures by which supervisors and chaperones can be contacted if necessary (e.g. cell phone numbers and hotel room numbers).

#### 4.4. Alcohol and Illegal Substances

4.4.1. The use and/or possession of alcohol or controlled substances by student participants, volunteers, chaperones, supervisors or other staff is strictly prohibited during field trips regardless of the circumstances, the age of the participants, or local laws, customs, and culture. This includes cases in which students are billeted.

#### 4.5. Informed Consent

- 4.5.1. Parents must be informed in writing of the potential risks inherent in any field trip activities and travel arrangements. Advance communication must be provided addressing:
  - 4.5.1.1. Nature of the field trip;
  - 4.5.1.2. Rationale for the field trip;
  - 4.5.1.3. Transportation and accommodation arrangements (if applicable);
  - 4.5.1.4. Level of supervision; and
  - 4.5.1.5. Scope of risks and potential for injury inherent in the trip/activities and the safety precautions in place to address these issues.

## 5. Conduct

### 5.1. Expectations of Students

- 5.1.1. Students shall adhere to behavioural expectations as outlined in the School Code of Conduct while on field trips, whether local or outside the province. This will be reinforced in parent and student meetings and communications prior to the departure of the trip.

### 5.2. Expectations of Supervisors and Chaperones

- 5.2.1. Trip supervisor(s) and chaperone(s) are expected to supervise students twenty-four (24) hours per day, to serve as role models to students and to act as ambassadors of the District. No controlled substances or alcohol are to be consumed during the trip.

### 5.3. Incident Reporting

- 5.3.1. The trip supervisor must report all instances of misconduct to the Principal. Where a student is in serious violation of the code of conduct, supervisors must contact the Principal (or Superintendent if the Principal is unavailable) before taking disciplinary action. A student shall not be asked to return home on his or her own unless specific arrangements are approved by the Principal, nor shall the action taken deprive a student of appropriate supervision or safety.

## 6. Volunteers

### 6.1. Definition

- 6.1.1. A “volunteer” is someone who has made an accepted commitment to assist the school staff without compensation.

### 6.2. Selection Process

- 6.2.1. Volunteers are selected on the following basis:
  - 6.2.1.1. Perceived ability to deal with students;
  - 6.2.1.2. Skill in performing/providing needed services;
  - 6.2.1.3. Previous related experience; and
  - 6.2.1.4. Personal characteristics.

### 6.3. Criminal Record Check

6.3.1. All volunteers will require a current Criminal Record Check that will be submitted to the Principal and then filed in District office.

### 6.4. Orientation

6.4.1. The Principal will ensure that an orientation occurs for volunteers to review relevant and applicable policies and procedures and to provide any necessary direction or specific instruction related to the field trip. Particular attention will be paid to procedures related to student safety and conduct.

## 7. Financial

### 7.1. Trip Fees

7.1.1. Schools may charge fees for optional field trips that enhance a student's learning experience but are not essential to the learning outcomes of a particular course. Extra-curricular field trips are not considered part of the educational program; therefore, fees may be charged. The costs of such trips may be wholly or partially offset through fundraising activities (see Administrative Procedure 520 - Fundraising).

### 7.2. Financial Hardship

7.2.1. Provided that students meet the criteria for participation in a field trip, financial hardship will not prevent a student from participating.

### 7.3. Teacher-On-Call Costs

7.3.1. Teacher-On-Call expenses to replace staff absent on field trips are to be factored into the financial planning for a trip and are the responsibility of the Principal.

### 7.4. Supervisor's Travel Expenses

7.4.1. Where parents are financially contributing to field trips, financial arrangements for staff and volunteer travel costs must be transparent, including the use of any "free" tickets and the accruing travel benefits earned from the group's travel.

## 8. Travel

### 8.1. Informed Consent

8.1.1. Parents must be informed of the method or type of transportation that will be used to transport students and give their permission for such transportation for their children on a field trip.

### 8.2. Preferred Mode

8.2.1. The preferred mode of transportation for groups of more than six (6) students is by school bus or commercial vehicle.

### 8.3. Private Vehicle

8.3.1. If a private passenger vehicle is used for transportation on field trips, the Principal must ensure that the owner of the vehicle carries adequate insurance coverage including at least \$1,000,000 third party liability insurance and will provide safe transportation.

- 8.3.2. A private passenger vehicle used for transporting students must be driven by an adult holding the required driver's license in accordance with the Motor Vehicle Act. A copy of the driver's license, the driver's abstract, and proof of valid insurance must be provided to the Principal prior to transporting students in private vehicles during school activities.
- 8.3.3. British Columbia child restraint legislation requires that all passengers must properly use the seat belts provided and that students under nine (9) years of age or less than 145 cm tall be properly secured in approved booster seats. Students twelve years (12) of age or younger are not permitted to ride in the front seat of a car if it is equipped with air bags. It is the responsibility of the drivers of private vehicles to ensure that all passengers are properly secured.
- 8.3.4. The District will not be responsible for physical damage or repairs to the individual's vehicle or for the loss of use or safe driver discount resulting from the use of the vehicle on school business.

#### 8.4. Student Drivers

- 8.4.1. While the preferred mode of transportation is by school bus, commercial vehicle or with a parent volunteer, senior secondary students, with the permission of the Principal and the parent, may transport themselves on authorized school trips within the boundaries of SD53 (Okanagan-Similkameen) and SD67 (Okanagan Skaha). The parent and the registered vehicle owner must complete the [Form 565-1: Conveyance form \(For Use of Private Vehicles during School Activities\)](#), available at the District Office.
- 8.4.2. Student drivers are prohibited from transporting other students as passengers on school approved field trips.

Reference: Sections 17, 20, 22, 65, 75, 85 School Act  
Motor Carrier Act  
Motor Vehicles Act  
Collective Agreements

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