

1.0. School Administration

1.A. General

1.A. OFF-SITE EXCURSIONS AND EDUCATIONAL TOURS

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Policy Reference: EL-1.1/EL-1.8

The following document is based upon the Province of Manitoba's Youth Safe Manitoba: School Field Trip Resource and Appropriate Educational Programming regulations.

“A balance must be struck between the meticulous supervision of children every moment of school and the desirable objective of encouraging sturdy independence as they grow up.”
Justice McNair (1954)

Board Philosophy and Value

Trips should be of an educational nature. Instructional field trips are those which are directly related to ongoing classroom instruction and are considered a method of instruction. Definite objectives are determined in advance. When possible, school staff should consider the wide variety of opportunities within the boundaries of Lakeshore School Division as well as those trips that are available in-province, out-of-province, and internationally.

Student safety will be of prime consideration on all field trips. YouthSafe Manitoba, School Field Trip Resource guidelines must be met or exceeded for all off-site activities. These guidelines must be adhered to by participants.

1. Regulations and Guidelines

Regulations and guidelines in field trip policies shall provide direction and guidance in each of the following areas:

a) The Administrative Process

The teacher in charge of a field trip must consult with, and obtain the approval of the principal, before planning for all off-site activities even when these trips occur during school vacation periods. Principals must request authorization from the Board for prior approval of out of province, over-night and overseas student excursions. Once approval is obtained, the teacher may proceed with planning, submitting an education assessment that:

- i) Includes a statement of purpose that explicitly defines the instructional objectives

- ii) Outlines intended pre and post activities as required (refer to Field Trip Proposal: Form B, pages 5-9)
- iii) Applications must be submitted to the Board at the beginning of the planning process of overnight and/or extended off-site trips.
- iv) Athletic teams engaged in competitions or playoffs, must submit the application to the Board immediately after winning the preceding competitive level.

Off-site trips – e.g. athletic teams, music groups, etc, that require an overnight stay must have prior approval by the Board. Groups making repeated overnight trips, e.g. athletic teams, band, should submit a yearly schedule to the Board for approval as soon as a schedule is available.

b) **Roles and Responsibilities of:**

- i) Board of Trustees
 - Shall provide appropriate direction and support of their staff and students to promote safety.
 - Shall have policies and processes that state division safety goals and the roles and responsibilities of staff to ensure that all off-site trips are addressing safety.
- ii) Senior Administrators
 - Will ensure that staff is familiar with the policies and guidelines regarding off-site activities.
 - Will ensure that building administrators are provided with the necessary information and support to fulfill the requirements for off-site activities.
- iii) School Administrators
 - Will adhere to Board policy.
 - Will advise parents of any and all off-site excursions.
 - Will provide guidance and support to all staff throughout the entire process of planning and implementing field trips.
- iv) Teacher-in-charge
 - Will assume responsibility for the group.
 - Will provide all necessary information to administrators/parents and the Board.
 - Will recruit parents, guardians and other adults for supervision
 - Will review acceptable standards of conduct with all involved in the field trip.
 - Will carry out all of the planning necessary for a safe and successful field trip, adhering to Board policy.

- v) Other Staff
 - Will comply with the direction provided by the teacher supervisor.
 - Will comply with Board policy.

- vi) Service Providers
 - Teachers will contact the service providers, e.g. ski hills, pools, etc. to ensure that a safety plan is in place.

- vii) Volunteers
 - Will conduct themselves in accordance with Board policy.
 - Comply with teacher direction.
 - Will submit to Criminal Record Check and Child Abuse Registry check.

- viii) Parents/Guardians
 - Will be provided with adequate and relevant information regarding the field trip.
 - Will provide an informed consent.
 - Will provide the necessary information regarding any potential medical emergencies, e.g. allergic reaction.
 - Acknowledge awareness and acceptance of appropriate physical risks related to the activity.

- ix) Students
 - Must comply with the requirements of the school's and division's Student Code of Conduct.
 - Who can not be self-controlled or teacher-controlled may be excluded from field trips.
 - Must comply with all safety guidelines particular to an activity.

c) **Accessibility and Inclusivity of Field Trips**

Since field trips and excursions encompass a variety of activities, it is important that:

- Activities should be geared to the students' capabilities, e.g. fitness, skills, etc.
- Each student should receive proper instruction in the use of all equipment.
- Each student should receive proper instruction in the development of related skills.
- Each student has adequate and safe equipment for the activity and appropriate clothing and footwear for the outing.

Participation is voluntary unless the activity is a compulsory part of the curriculum.

- Non-participants will be provided meaningful, alternative activities.
- Diversity of our students is valued. Involvement and/or participation in an off-site activity provides equal access for all students. Religion, sexual or ethnic affiliation, socio-economic position or level of ability or disability do not disallow any student from having the opportunity for participation.
- Costs are not prohibitive. No student shall be excluded from an activity, that is a required part of the curriculum, due to costs.

d) Trip Planning and Approval Criteria

Risk Management

Risk or safety management involves a conscious process to reduce loss related to an activity, i.e. ask whether this is the right group, in the right place, at the right time, with the right gear.

Reference: YouthSafe Manitoba: School Field Trip Resource

- Group involved (e.g. age/grade, numbers of boys and girls)
- Dates and times for the field trip
- Destination(s)/route and contact information
- Itinerary of activities to be undertaken, especially those of a higher care nature
- Information to be given to parents and informed parent/guardian consent/acknowledgement of risk to be secured (see Parental Consent Policy section)
- Notification if a pre-trip parent/guardian meeting is to be held
- Students' Health/Medical information and medical treatment securement consents to be secured, if appropriate
- Any special needs considerations
- Financial arrangements (estimated cost/source(s) as relevant)
- Requirements for additional insurance (if relevant)
- Transportation arrangements (see iv. Transportation Regulations and Procedures) as relevant
- Supervision arrangements; e.g. number and gender each of staff/volunteers/others; whether and how groups will be subdivided for activities, sleeping (if relevant) **Reference: YouthSafe Manitoba, School Field Trip Resource, pages 59-61. Also, see Appendix A.**
- Selecting and briefing supervisors/volunteers re: trip plan and their roles/responsibilities
- Accommodations arrangements (if relevant)
- Teacher/leader/service provider competencies relevant to group, activities and environment(s)

- Safety plan (i.e. procedures for managing the key inherent risks of the activities, environments and participants)
- Emergency plan to deal with injured/ill/lost or stranded participant(s)
- Confirmation of the presence of alternative contingency plan(s)
- Contact home number at/near destination
- Teacher-in-charge or other key contact and phone number
- Documents to be carried on trip and those to be kept in office, and
- Other relevant information unique to the particular trip

II Other Board Requirements

In all school sponsored trips involving students, provision will be made for proper supervision:

- Minimum one teacher per class or extra-curricular activity and up to two teachers maximum for overnight, out of province class or extra-curricular trips. Consideration for an additional teacher is at the discretion of the Board.
- The teacher shall have overall responsibility for the group.
- The teacher is responsible for informing accompanying adults of their duties and responsibilities.
- Non-certified staff, parents and volunteers may assist in supervision
- When students of both sexes are participating in a field trip, there shall be at least one male and one female supervisor.
- The teacher will review acceptable standards of conduct with supervisors and students.
- All supervisors must be able to present proof of child abuse registry and criminal record checks.
- In the event of a national, or international incident that would place students in a potentially dangerous predicament, the Board has the right to rescind approval of that trip.

III Emergency Situations/Accidents

Schools need to inform parents in September that particular trips will require additional coverage so they can access the insurance in September.

Should an emergency situation occur, the teacher is responsible for notifying the principal by telephone as soon as possible. The principal is responsible for contacting the parent(s)/guardian(s) to obtain instructions.

Since field trips and excursions encompass a variety of activities it is important that:

1. Activities be geared to the students' capabilities.
2. Each student receive proper instruction in the use of all equipment and related skills.

3. Each student has adequate and safe equipment for the activity, and appropriate clothing and footwear for the outing.
4. At least one supervisor is knowledgeable in first aid; a record must be kept of all first aid treatments, and a properly stocked first aid kit will be available during all phases of the activity.
5. Supervisors make regular equipment safety checks.
6. Supervisors have a complete list of emergency resources – i.e. police, ambulance, parents, doctor's phone number, nearest hospital phone number, location of nearest telephone and emergency transportation, and leave a schedule and route with the nearest RCMP office. Cell phones, where possible, should be available.

The safety guidelines for physical activity in Manitoba schools must be met or exceeded for all off-site activities and must be adhered to by all participants.

Accidents

In the case of an accident involving an injury on any excursion, the supervisor in charge must write an accident report listing the pertinent details and submit it to the principal when back at the school. This report should be forwarded immediately to the Superintendent's attention (Reg./Proc. 1.0/1.A/1.10).

Further considerations that should be given if an accident occurs:

1. The teacher in charge must determine whether or not the trip will continue based upon all circumstances.
2. The teacher must notify the principal at the earliest opportunity if serious injuries have occurred. The principal will inform the Superintendent, parent(s)/guardian(s) and others as necessary.

IV Transportation Regulations and Procedures

The Lakeshore Board of Trustees expects that schools transport students in a safe manner.

Regulations and Procedures

a) Vehicles and Equipment

Types of Vehicles Used

- School buses are generally the preferred mode of transportation for students wherever available and feasible.
- The use of private vehicles to transport a sick or injured student from the school or school activity to their homes or for medical attention is allowed, as long as the vehicle is properly insured.
- Other circumstances may arise where private vehicles may be the only or best option for transporting students.

Other Vehicle and Equipment Considerations

- If private vehicles are used, the **driver** is responsible for ensuring proper use of the occupant restraint systems; i.e., seatbelts, head restraints, airbags, seat position.
- Appropriate car seats must be used for children under 18.2 kg (40 lbs.).
- Children should ride in the rear. Where a vehicle is equipped with a front passenger-side airbag, students who do not meet the safe minimum height and age (12 years) requirement for the airbag must not be transported in that seat unless the device has been deactivated.

b) Drive Selection Options

- Use of mature, experienced drivers is preferred. Volunteer drivers (e.g. teachers, other staff, parents/guardians, other adult volunteers, may drive students on school-sponsored field trips.
- Lakeshore School Division will not sanction students providing transportation to fellow students during extra-curricular activities or field trips.

c) Private Vehicle/Volunteer Driver Regulations/Guidelines:

Regulations generally require that the principal or designate follow appropriate procedures for helping ensure that the candidate driver and vehicle are appropriate, including the following:

Licensing

- Drivers confirm that they are appropriately licensed for the vehicle(s) and number of passengers.

Insurance

- When securing a vehicle, check that the employer has third party vehicle liability insurance covering intended drivers.

Other Driver-related Considerations

- All volunteer drivers must complete a volunteer Driver-Authorization to Transport Students form (whether they are staff, parents, students, or other volunteers). Completed forms are to be reviewed and signed by the principal or designate prior to the individual transporting students in a private vehicle on school business. A copy must be kept on file in the school office (see sample in Forms File).

d) References

The Highway Traffic Act, CC.C.S.M. c.H60.

V PARENTAL CONSENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Parental consent is to be secured and parents must be well-informed about the particulars of the trip beforehand.

a) Information Given to Parents

The field trip planner provides appropriate, relevant information related to established trip plan criteria. The details should be kept brief and presented in plain language. A pre-trip parents' meeting should be held.

Information provided parent(s)/guardian(s) may include:

- Group involved (e.g., class subject and/or number, name of club, etc.)
- Purpose and objectives of the proposed trip
- Departure and return dates and times for the trip (and drop-off and pick-up times if these are different than the normal school day)
- Destination(s)/route(s) (brief description, sketch map, etc., as appropriate)
- Itinerary, including general times and activities to be undertaken
- Notification if a pre-trip parent meeting is to be held, including date, time and location of the meeting
- Notification that parents must inform the teacher-in-charge about any relevant medical conditions of the student (ensuring compliance with FIPPA and PHIA legislation)
- Notification that parents must give trip supervisors authority to seek necessary medical treatment for their student and assume any costs associated with such
- Financial arrangements, and cost per student (if relevant)
- Transportation arrangements (see Transportation Regulations & Procedures)
- Number of supervisors
- Need for additional medical insurance (if relevant)
- Accommodations arrangements (for overnight or longer trips)
- Unusual factors/special risks presented by the group, activity and/or environment
- Safety plan (e.g. notification that there are procedures in place for managing the common risks associated with the activities, environments and participants; details of plan shared at pre-trip parents' meeting if one is held, or on request)
- Emergency plan(s) (e.g. notification of the presence of a plan to deal with ill/injured/lost/stranded participants or other eventualities; details of plan shared at pre-trip parents' meeting if one is held, or on request)
- Alternative contingency plan(s) and for overnight or longer or remote area trips, whether and how changes would be communicated to parents; e.g. phone fan out)
- Behavioural expectations and consequences
- List of clothing and equipment to be supplied by the parents/student

- Requirement to bring water, lunch, snacks and/or other additional food, as necessary
- Notification that participation is voluntary (if it is) and that non-participants will be provided meaningful alternative activities
- Teacher-in-charge or other key contact and phone number
- Signature and title of administrator(s) approving the trip, and
- Other relevant information unique to the particular trip or board's expectations which may influence the parent(s)/guardian(s)' decision to provide consent

b) Information/Acknowledgements/Consents Sought from Parents

Appropriate, pertinent information, acknowledgements and consents must be sought and secured from parents/guardians so that: a) the staff may make an informed decision about the trip's appropriateness and safety for the student, and b) the board's legal requirements are met.

Information Sought

The types of information most often sought from parents include:

- Current medical history of the student; e.g., allergies, chronic or recent acute illnesses, injuries or disabilities, phobias, etc. that could affect participation, and health care and/or dietary requirements.
- Related requirements for program modification and/or specific activities offered on the trip that the parent does not consent to the child participating in.
- Medications the student will need to take on the trip, including the name of each medication, reason for taking it, dosage and times taken, administration method, duration of the treatment, storage requirements, potential side-effect, first aid treatment for side-effects and physician contact information (refer to 7.0 Safe Schools 1.1). Note which medications the student will carry and administer themselves as needed (e.g. inhaler, epi-pen).
- 6-digit Manitoba Health Registration Number (family) and 9-digit Personal Health Information Number (PHIN), and emergency contact names and phone numbers.

Acknowledgements Sought/Required

An acknowledgement of risk does not constitute a waiver of any legal rights of the child or parent, but it does demonstrate significant awareness and acceptance of the inherent risks of the activity. It helps define "informed consent".

Consents

Consent forms ensure that the school has the parent/guardian's permission for the child to participate in the activity in question. The following specific items commonly require written consent of the parent/guardian:

- Consent for mode of transportation, if other than school bus. This generally includes separate consents for situations where the student will be a passenger in a private vehicle with a volunteer driver.
- Authority for trip supervisors to seek necessary medical treatment for the child, at the parent/guardian's expense if any costs are associated.
- Authorization for trip supervisors to dispense prescription medication(s) the child will need to take over the trip period, and
- Consent for the student to participate on the trip.

Security and Destruction of Personal Health Information

The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) requires school divisions/districts to store personal health information in such a way that only those who need to obtain the information will have access to it. Personal health information should not be disclosed outside the trustee board unless such a disclosure has been assessed to determine whether it is permitted by PHIA (e.g. sharing it with a medical practitioner to care for an injured child). The information must not even be accessed by people within the board unless it is determined that they need to have that access (e.g. a service provider instructor). **See Section 30 (3) of PHIA.**

Staff and volunteers who have access to the personal health information of students should be required to sign a pledge of confidentiality that they will not disclose this information to anyone except for the express purpose of ensuring quality, timely care of the individual whose information is shared.

c) References

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (C.C.S.M. c.F175) and *the Personal Health Information Act (C.C.S.M. c.P33.5)*.

USE OF VOLUNTEERS ON FIELD TRIPS

1. The Lakeshore Board of Trustees allows and encourages the use of volunteers to supervise and chaperone students on school-sponsored field trips.
2. All volunteers are required to provide a Criminal Record and Child Abuse Registry check.
3. Any adults accompanying an extra-curricular trip are regarded as an integral part of the activity and must play a critical and active role in the supervision and chaperoning of the students.
4. No adults shall assume the role of "tourists" when participating in an extra-curricular trip.
5. Adult volunteers shall be under the direction of the supervising teacher.

6. The responsibility of supervising or chaperoning is not to be delegated to anyone not listed on the previously submitted documentation.

Regulations/Guidelines

a) Working with Volunteers

Whether operating with a teacher present or alone, volunteers have a right to be informed re: the parameters of their involvement and they should be oriented to their role(s), right and responsibilities, including as relevant:

- Pertinent Division/District policies.
- Procedures, practice guidelines and limits of authority, if any, of relevance to the volunteers' role (e.g. transportation guidelines if driving students; supervision guidelines; behavioural expectations of students, staff and volunteers; emergency procedures; confidentiality of student personal and health information; activity specific guidelines).

Staff must also be apprised of the need to communicate appropriate information to selected volunteers to ensure that they are clear regarding the following:

- Educational goals and objectives
- Itinerary and activities
- Logistics
- Student grouping
- Anticipated roles, responsibilities, duties and assignments of the volunteers
- Board and school expectation of volunteers
- The safety plan, and
- The emergency plan

Reference: Forms, sample letters, checklists, etc. are included in the Youth Safe Manitoba, School Field Trip Resource available through the Principal. Forms that may be more generally used by the schools are appendaged to this document.