
FIELD TRIPS AND OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES

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Background

qathet School District understands the educational value of curricular and extra-curricular Field Trips and Outdoor Experiences that supplement educational programs for students.

Effective learning experiences often result from first hand observation of, or participation in events or activities that occur out in the community away from the school. The Board believes it is of paramount importance that Field Trips are selected, planned, organized, and conducted in the context of:

- *The activity is affordable, accessible and offers clear benefits to students while being relevant to curriculum and integral to the educational process.*
- *The activity is appropriate and effective for student's educational program and curriculum.*
- *Adult supervising staff having the requisite skills and experience to provide safe and appropriate Field Trip experiences.*
- *Safety and security of all participants is the first priority (e.g. students, staff, volunteers and the School District)*
- *The Activity has been reviewed for risk assessment, ability to mitigate risk and overall management of off-site activities.*

Students participating in Field Trips and outdoor education experiences will behave in accordance with the School and District Codes of Conduct and any special directions required to maintain proper structure and safety pertaining to the activity as determined by the Principal, trip supervisor, and site managers.

The Safety First! Guidelines for BC School Off-site Experiences can be found on the qathet School District staff portal under Field Trips.

Administrative Procedure 260

The following provides procedural guidelines regarding curricular and extra curricular Field Trips and Outdoor Experiences. While this Administrative Procedure outlines the planning requirements and process to obtain approval for various types of Field Trips and Outdoor Experiences it does not include the knowledge required to do so safely and competently. As such, in cases where more specific information or resources are required they can be located in *Safety First!* Guidelines for BC School Off-site Experiences.

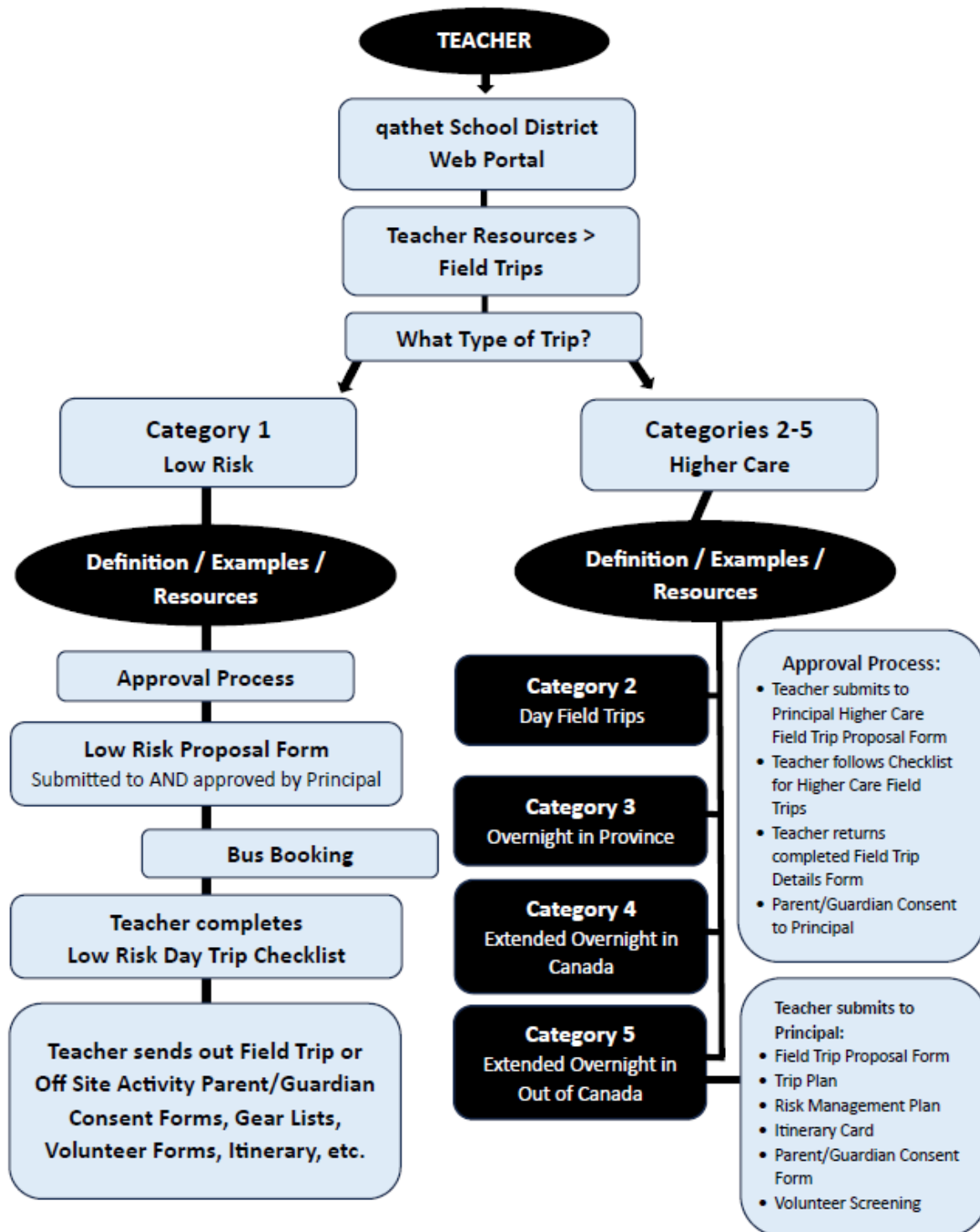
A. GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Well-defined procedures are necessary to minimize the potential of serious harm to the health and safety of students and teachers.
- Prior to submitting the Field Trip Proposal to the Principal, teachers must review and follow the appropriate **Field Trip Checklists** associated with the type of trip they plan on leading.
- All Field Trip activities must have approval of the school Principal. Changes to the approved Field Trip activity must have the approval of the Principal.
- All Field Trip activities must have active written parental (guardian) consent for students to participate (see *Guidelines for Parent Information Letters* below).
- Extra medical insurance is mandatory for students when participating in school district activities outside BC or Canada, no matter the length of the activity.

B. PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL: LOW RISK AND HIGHER CARE TRIPS

All District employees responsible for planning and authorizing Field Trips are to be knowledgeable of the category definitions for Field Trips being proposed.

Potential Field Trips and related activities are identified as either “Low Risk” or “Higher Care”. Higher Care Field Trips are further categorized according to additional risk factors.



Category 1: LOW RISK Day Trips	
Definition:	These same day trips consist of standard educational, recreational, extra-curricular activities (i.e. most school athletic teams) in Powell River and do NOT involve high-risk activities or overnight stays and the nature of the activities are considered lower in risk.
Examples:	<p>Include, but are not limited to: community visits to the local fire hall, police station etc., travelling to local destinations such as other schools, museums, libraries, fish hatcheries, gymnastics club, historical sites, musical/drama events, neighborhood walks, parks, community farms, pumpkin patch, on-going activities such as beach/seaside studies, wetlands, school team and sporting events, ice-skating rinks and swimming in supervised pools with certified lifeguards e.g. Art Start Rec Complex pool, some OLC Activities.</p> <p><i>Note: Low-Risk day Field Trips include trips where students return to the school within the same school day. If activities are extra-curricular in nature (i.e. athletic teams), a teacher sponsored, Principal approved volunteer may supervise.</i></p>
Approval Process:	<p>For initial approval, the teacher or teacher sponsor of a Principal approved volunteer must complete and submit the following forms to the Principal for approval at least one (1) week prior to trip:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Low Risk Proposal Form (Form 260-1) ● Following the initial approval, the teacher or teacher sponsor must follow the Field Trip Checklist for Low Risk Day Trips (Form 260-2) and have it signed off by the Principal 48 hours prior to departure. ● Parent / Guardian Acknowledgement of Risk (Form 260-3) or Annual Consent Form (Form 260-4). This must be completed for all low-risk Field Trips. NOTE: An Annual Low Risk Blanket Form (Form 260-4) may be used by a classroom teacher for several very low risk activities of a like nature (for example regular trips to the Gymnastics Club) and by a sponsoring teacher/athletic teacher for several sport team related activities of a like nature (for example, volleyball games, art start, farm trips). ● Please note that for important, emergent trips the Principal has the discretion to sign off with less notification.
Categories 2-5: HIGHER CARE FIELD TRIPS	
Definition:	These pertain to any trip, which includes a higher level of consideration and care. These may last up to a full day, or overnight and may last for two days or more within the Province of British Columbia.



	The nature of these trips, regardless of their duration, entail a moderate to high level of risk that is higher than activities in which students are normally engaged in at school. Many of the activities in this designation are included but not limited to the <i>Restricted Field Trip Activities List</i> (Tab 1:Table 2).
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General Planning Considerations for All HIGHER CARE: Trips:

- As part of the planning for high risk activities, the Principal and teacher-in-charge will:
- ✓ Be encouraged to access Youth Safe Outdoors *Safety First!* Guidelines for BC School Off-site Experiences.
 - ✓ Determine age appropriateness of the activity.
 - ✓ Determine skill level needed to participate in the activity.
 - ✓ Identify and assess students’ potential exposure to injury.
 - ✓ Weigh the risks against the educational value.
 - ✓ Select and implement appropriate strategies to reduce or remove the risk of harm.
 - ✓ Ensure that planning documents (Emergency Response Plans) are current and all stakeholders are engaged in the event that the plan needs activation.
 - ✓ Ensure that consent forms include specific risks and potential injuries associated with the activity or trip.
 - ✓ For high-risk activities Category 3 and up, in addition to the written signed ***Parent/ Guardian Consent and Waiver Notice Form***, a pre-trip briefing meeting usually must be held with parents and students. While the format for the meeting may vary, the purpose of the pre-trip briefing meeting is to ensure parents and students have all the appropriate information with respect to the trip that parents know and accept the level of risks involved in the activity and that the school and district code of conduct prevails.
 - ✓ The teacher-in-charge must have the training, knowledge and recent field experience appropriate for leading the trip and must have visited the location of the off-site activity prior to the trip and be familiar with the seasonal conditions at the time of the trip.
 - ✓ Identify any specialized resources needed. These resources may include: safety equipment; first aid kits and communications devices; qualified District approved service providers; instructors; and/or Guides familiar with the area.
 - ✓ The volunteers and supervisors selected must be appropriate for the activity and must be provided with direction as to the requirements of the trip and their responsibilities before the departure of the off-site activity whether it be one day or several.
 - ✓ Students must wear appropriate clothing and safety equipment recommended for the activity.

Category 2 HIGHER CARE: Full Day Field Trips

Definition:	The nature of the activities included in these day trips, regardless of their duration, have a moderate to high risk. <i>Higher Care Day Field Trips include:</i> Outdoor School Programs: Front or back country Field Trips* where an outdoor setting is important and it becomes the classroom.
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	<p>*Front Country: within 15 minutes of an ambulance reaching your exact location</p> <p>*Back Country: greater than 15 minutes of an ambulance reaching your exact location</p> <p>Outdoor Pursuits: refers to activities related to self-propelled travel on land, water and snow or ice (e.g. hiking, kayaking, skiing). The definition of outdoor pursuit includes higher risk activities, such as skiing, and extended wilderness travel. Outdoor pursuits are typically of a ‘Higher Care’ nature and as such these environments require some more specialized awareness, planning, instruction and leadership. Outdoor pursuit does not include local ice area activities, such as skating, hockey or curling.</p>
Examples:	<p>Include, but are not limited to: Outdoor Education and some Physical Education Activities. Outdoor pursuits such as hiking, orienteering, outdoor rock climbing, horseback riding, cycling, mountain biking, boat trip, canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding, sailing, natural outdoor ice-skating, skiing, snowboarding, snow shoeing, swimming in natural settings, where students return same day.</p>
Approval Process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Submit to the Principal the Proposal for Higher Care Field Trip Form (Form 260-5), at least two (2) weeks prior to the excursion date, to the School Principal. ● Following the initial approval from the office of the School Principal, the teacher or teacher sponsor must follow the Checklist for Higher Care Field Trip (Form 260-6) and have it signed off by the office of the Principal a minimum of <u>one week</u> prior to departure. *Unpredictable or changing conditions (eg. Weather, group, access etc.) may necessitate implementing a contingency plan. ● Forms to be completed include: Detailed Trip Plan (Form 260-7), Risk Management Plan (Form 260-8), Itinerary Card (Form 260-9), Parent/Guardian Risk Acknowledgement (Form 260-10), Student Health/Medical Form for Higher Care (Form 260-11) and could include Volunteer Forms (Form 260-12 and Form 260-13) as required.
<p>Category 3 HIGHER CARE: Overnight (one or two night) In Province Field Trips</p>	
Definition:	<p>These are the same as Low Risk Day Field Trips or Higher Care Day Field Trips but with an overnight component added.</p>
Examples:	<p>Include but are not limited to: students travelling out of Powell River (but staying in British Columbia) for extra curricular team sports, cultural or any other sanctioned educational purpose where an overnight stay is required. E.g, Sports team trips, Science World, band trips.</p> <p>Year round overnight trips that could include Outdoor Pursuits listed above. Winter Camping Trips that include skiing / snowshoeing trip to a local cabin, sleepover and</p>

	<p>return next day. Other examples include trips involving camping, hiking, orienteering, outdoor rock climbing, horseback riding, cycling, mountain biking, boat trip, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, natural outdoor ice-skating, skiing, snowboarding, snow shoeing, swimming in natural settings etc.^[SEP]</p>
<p>Approval Process:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Submit Proposal for Higher Care Field Trip Form (Form 260-5) to Principal at least two (2) weeks prior to the excursion date, to the office of the school Principal. ● Inform parents of all safety plans and trip details and information. (Itinerary, financial planning, sleeping arrangements, hazards, inherent risks and safety plan) either by pre-trip parent briefing information meeting(s) or other means of communication. ● Following the initial approval from the office of the School Principal the teacher or teacher sponsor must follow the Checklist for Higher Care Field Trips (Form 260-6) and have it signed off by the School Principal <u>one week</u> prior to departure. ● Forms to be completed include Detailed Trip Plan (Form 260-7), Risk Management Plan (Form 260-8), Itinerary Card (Form 260-9), Parent/Guardian Risk Acknowledgement (Form 260-10), Student Health/Medical Form for Higher Care (Form 260-11), Passenger List (Form 260-14) and could include Volunteer Forms (Form 260-12, Form 260-13, Form 260-15, Form 260-16) as required.
<p>Category 4 HIGHER CARE: Extended Overnight Field Trips within Canada</p>	
<p>Definition:</p>	<p>Higher Care extended Field Trips includes those with overnight stays of more than two nights. These trips could be in or out of Province of British Columbia and typically relate to students travelling to sporting, cultural, or other educational events. They also include students participating on trips involving Outdoor Pursuits and Educational exchange programs within Canada.</p>
<p>Examples:</p>	<p>Include but are not limited to: multi day Outdoor Pursuits such as canoe trips, sailing trips, hiking trips, kayaking, ski, etc. Band or Choir tours, Multi day ‘peak experience’ or educational exchange trips to other communities in the Region. Longer duration trips on the Powell Forest Canoe Route, Sunshine Coast Trail etc.</p>
<p>Approval Process:</p>	<p>For these Higher Care Field Trips, the teacher must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Submit Proposal for Higher Care Field Trip Form (Form 260-5) to Principal at least 3 months prior to the excursion date.*Under special circumstances timelines might be adjusted eg. Provincial Championships.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit the Principal approved Proposal for Higher Care Field Trip Form (Form 260-5) and all trip related planning forms at least two (2) months prior to the excursion date, to the office of the Superintendent or designate. • Hold parent information meetings, which are required in order to fully inform parents of the itinerary, insurance and travel documents needed, financial planning, sleeping arrangements, supervision plans, hazards, inherent risks and safety plan, emergency and contingency plans. • Following the initial approval from the office of the Principal AND Superintendent, the teacher or teacher sponsor must follow the Checklist for Higher Care Field Trips (Form 260-6) and have it signed off by the office of the Superintendent designate, 72 hours prior to departure. • Forms to be completed include Detailed Trip Plan (Form 260-7), Detailed Trip Plan (Form 260-7), Risk Management Plan (Form 260-8), Itinerary Card (Form 260-9), Parent/Guardian Risk Acknowledgement (Form 260-10), Student Health/Medical Form for Higher Care (Form 260-11, Passenger List (Form 260-14) and could include Volunteer Forms (Forms 260-12, 260-13, 260-15, 260-16), Master Agreement and Mutual Indemnification (Form 260-18), Notification of Severe Allergies (Form 260-19), Medication Administration Log (Form 260-20), First Aid Log (Form 260-21), Incident Reports (260-22 or 260-23) as required.
<p>Category 5 HIGHER CARE: Extended Field Trips Out of Country</p>	
<p>Definition:</p>	<p>Any overseas international trips.</p>
<p>Examples:</p>	<p>Include but are not limited to: Germany Exchange Program, choir trip to Europe, band trip to Cuba etc.</p>
<p>Approval Process:</p>	<p>For these Higher Care Field Trips, the teacher must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Proposal for Higher Care Field Trip Form (Form 260-5) to Principal at least 6 months prior to the excursion date. • Submit the Principal approved Proposal for Higher Care Field Trip Form (Form 260-5) and all trip related planning forms at six (6) months prior to the excursion date, to the office of the Superintendent or designate. • Hold parent information meetings, which are required in order to fully inform parents of the itinerary, insurance and travel documents needed, financial planning, sleeping arrangements, supervision plans, hazards, inherent risks and safety plan, emergency and contingency plans. • Reference (and continue to monitor) the Government of Canada and Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade websites to determine risks associated with travel to the destination country(ies), and check in with applicable service providers as they may have important information.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have trip cancellation insurance and back up plans for last minute, unforeseeable events. • Extra medical insurance is mandatory for students when participating in school district activities outside of Canada (including to Washington State), no matter the length of the activity. • Following the initial approval from the office of the Superintendent or designate, the teacher or teacher sponsor must follow the Checklist for Higher Care Field Trips (Form 260-6) and have it signed off by the office of the Superintendent or designate at minimum <u>one week</u> prior to departure. Consult the Principal and Office of the Superintendent for final sign off twelve (12) hours prior to departure to ensure a travel advisory has not been issued, or irreconcilable concerns have not arisen. • Forms to be completed include Detailed Trip Plan (Form 260-7), Risk Management Plan (Form 260-8), Itinerary Card (Form 260-9), Parent/Guardian Risk Acknowledgement (Form 260-10), Student Health/Medical Form for Higher Care (Form 260-11), Passenger List (Form 260-14) and could include Volunteer Forms (Forms 260-12, 260-13, 260-15, 260-16), Master Agreement and Mutual Indemnification (Form 260-18), Notification of Severe Allergies (Form 260-19), Medication Administration Log (Form 260-20) (Forms 316-1, 316-2 and 316-4), First Aid Log (Form 260-21), Incident Reports (260-22 or 260-23) as required.
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Excepted, Restricted and Prohibited Activities

For complete details on activities that have exceptions, restrictions and prohibitions, please see tables located in Appendix Section of this procedure.

C. GUIDELINES FOR FIELD TRIP SUPERVISION

Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:

- All Field Trips must be under the direct supervision or sponsorship of at least one School District No. 47 teacher, who, in collaboration with the school Principal, shall ensure that all provisions for safety and supervision are established well in advance and clearly communicated in writing to parents and students. Except Low-Risk Day Field Trips which are extra-curricular (i.e. school athletics).
- Field Trip planning and preparation must include a ‘supervision plan’ that takes into consideration any special supervision risk factors affecting the ratio of students to supervisors. These could include needs for specialized experience, skills and qualifications, and the need for female and male supervisors, and accommodating students with special needs. The degree of supervision depends on but is NOT limited to consideration of the following factors:



- Volunteers are under the direction of the lead teacher or designate for the duration of the trip. Volunteers have a responsibility to support and assist the teacher(s) in upholding the School and District Codes of Conduct.
 - The complete ability of the participants - degree of difficulty, physical strength, endurance, co-ordination, mobility, physical or developmental limitations.
 - Experience of the participants - first time experience versus various degrees of experience/skill in participating in the activity.
 - The age and maturity of the participants - factors such as physical size (height/weight), risk perception, comprehension of rules/instructions, are dependent on age and development.
 - The inherent danger in the activity and the circumstances of the particular activity (e.g., a trip to the museum would not need as many supervisors as a higher risk outdoor pursuit trip).
 - Environmental factors - site layout (clear sight lines versus obstructions), dispersed groups (i.e., ski hills, amusement parks), tour groups versus self-guided, presence of dangerous features (i.e., cliffs, allurements, unusual or inclement weather).
 - For any activity involving swimming follow ***Safety Regulations for Swimming, located in the Appendix section***. Including hotel swimming pools, ensure that a certified lifeguard is on duty at all times when students are at the water and determine the level of swimming ability of each student by having parents complete a ***Swimming Level Declaration*** which is part of the Student Health / Medical Form Higher Care.
- When considering the supervision plan; the Principal and teacher sponsor of a Principal approved volunteer will ensure:
 - That each supervisor and volunteer applicant has been reviewed and approved or denied by the Principal, as suitable for supervision on a case-by-case basis.
 - Gender Specifications for Supervision: on overnight trips, it is recommended that there be at least two (2) supervisors, no matter the size or age of the group, and the gender of the accompanying supervisors must be reflective of the student's gender identity attending the excursion. For example, overnight excursions with both male and female participants must include both a male and female adult supervisor. Students who identify as gender non-binary will communicate to staff prior to departure the supervisor(s) with whom they feel most comfortable dealing with.
 - Criminal Record Checks*** are conducted for all volunteers and supervisors (if they are expected to be alone with students). Volunteers will be reminded to use the 'rule of 3' and never be alone with a student.
 - Supervisors are made aware they are considered to be on supervision throughout the entire duration of a Field Trip and are expected to provide the supervision a careful and prudent parent would provide. Supervisors may not have other children (those not included in the Field Trip group) in their care during the trip.
 - The number of adult supervisors accompanying each trip is appropriate.
 - The Teacher must ensure volunteer supervisors are informed and competent to deal with emergencies that might arise.

- The minimum acceptable standard of qualified adult Supervisors to Students for all Field Trips, unless specifically required and adjusted by the Principal, or involving Higher Care Activities are located in Appendix Section of this procedure.

*For Low Risk Day Trips that are extra-curricular in nature (i.e. sports games) a Principal approved, teacher sponsored volunteer, may supervise students. In order for a Principal to approve such supervisors, the **Volunteer Screening Forms** must be satisfactorily completed. Please note that all extra-curricular activities, including school teams and clubs must have a teacher sponsor.

It is recognized however, that circumstances for each trip vary and the Principal will determine and approve the appropriate level of adult supervision. All higher care trips shall have a minimum of two adult supervisors and should have a significantly smaller ratio of students to adult supervision based on the activity.

- Additional supervision is required when:
 - There is an increased risk (See Category 3 requirements)
 - There is participation of students with special needs
 - There are crowded venues
- Teachers and Principals should seek further clarification on Activity specific industry standard supervision ratios by consulting the YSO **Supervision Calculation Tool** located on the YSO portal.

Specific Supervision Guidelines for Higher Care Field Trips (Category 2 and Above)

- For all higher care activities, competent instruction and vigilant supervision is mandatory. Competence may be established by virtue of a certificate from a recognized governing body, such as a Paddle Canada Instructor Certification. In areas where certificates are not issued, competency may be recognized by the leaders peers by virtue of experience, and demonstrated expertise in the activity. Qualified “Respected Outdoor Leaders” and service providers often may fulfill these functions.
- Situational factors must be considered when determining the appropriate number of supervisors for a higher-care activity. Generally, outdoor pursuits include risks that mandate more supervisors than a regular field trip excursion. In determining the appropriate number of supervisors required for an outdoor pursuit, assess:
 - Industry standards for supervision (the ratios set by specific industries/ organizations that govern the outdoor pursuits/activity);
 - Leadership factors (knowledge, skills, experience of the supervisors);
 - Student factors (age, grade, knowledge, fitness, skill, experience, behaviour, social needs); and
 - Trip factors (nature of activity, nature of environment, duration of outing, season, communication capacity, time/distance from emergency response).
- Appropriate supervision of a higher-risk outdoor pursuits must take into account the ability to maintain adequate supervision during the execution of a safety plan/emergency response plan.
- In approving a higher-risk outdoor pursuit trip proposal, the Principal must be satisfied that the Teacher or contracted service provider will provide adequate supervision and competent

instruction and follow recognized safety procedures for the planned activities. As such, it is imperative that those Educators who involve themselves in higher-risk outdoor pursuits have the required certification and/or competence or work with a Respected Outdoor Leader as a contracted service provider.

D. GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS ON OBTAINING PARENT OR GUARDIAN INFORMED CONSENT

Written, informed consent forms for each student must be completed to ensure that parents are aware of the Field Trip and related activities. All Field Trip activities must have active written parental (guardian) consent for students to participate.

What should go in an Information Letter?

Consent packages to parents/guardians should include the following information:

- Purpose and objectives of the trip, including curricular learning outcomes where relevant. Key activities involved.
- Itinerary (up to and including 'lights out' for overnight trips).
- Potential known risks.
- Safety plan.
- Emergency plan in the event of injury, illness or other problem.
- Notification that the school will secure emergency transport to medical services in the event that the student is injured and the parents/guardians will be responsible for any costs associated with such transport.
- Transportation/travel arrangements.
- Costs, due dates and awareness of financial support available as per SD policy regarding *Student Fees and Deposits*.
- Destination, including address or nearest locatable centre.
- Field Trip date(s) and times of departure and return.
- An inventory of what to bring (e.g. types of clothing, water, food).
- School contact name and number for more information.
- How students not attending can meet the same learning outcomes.

E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent Responsibility

- Parents are responsible to determine whether their child may participate in a Field Trip. In order to provide informed consent, comprehensive student field study information that clearly describes the educational benefits and safety risks must be communicated to parents.

Student Responsibility

- Students participating in Field Trips are considered to be under the same care and guidance of the Principal and/or teaching staff when on school Field Trips as when they are in school. Therefore students are expected to cooperate with all supervisors and comply with the school

rules, expectations and consequences for behavior (Student Code of Conduct). For certain trips it will be mandatory for students to fulfill all the preparatory requirements and administrative procedures.

Teacher Responsibility

- **Relevance:** Students should participate in Field Trips and Outdoor Experiences that further the goals of the school and the class' curriculum. ^{SEP} Trips should focus on the curriculum and all trips should be planned to minimize disruption to students' regular instructional program when applicable.
- **Compliance:** Ensure the Field Trip plan adheres to all other District Policies and Administrative Procedures, health standards or any other affected legislation. Teachers will ensure the Field Trip is appropriately planned, authorized and organized according to the standards set out as per the Guidelines set out in *Youth Safe Outdoors*.
- **Administrative Approvals:** Field Trips are considered to be an extension or enrichment of the prescribed curriculum and therefore, require teachers to complete all appropriate forms and receive approval as specified. Sponsoring teachers must review and follow the appropriate activity guidelines and complete the associated **Field Trip Proposals** and **Checklists** for the type of trip being planned.
 - Early notification and effective communication by the coordinating teacher with administration, teachers and parents in obtaining consent is essential.
 - The required approvals must be in place before commencing communications with parents / guardians or fundraising activities for the trip.
 - Health Canada Travel Advisory information will be considered whenever travel is out of province and/or the country.
 - An itinerary and other documents like bus lists and Trip Plans must be available in the school office for all overnight trips, including contact information in the event of an emergency.
 - Ensure detailed contact and trip information is left with the Principal; and communicated to parents.
- **Scheduling:** Tentative scheduling of Field Trips must be discussed and planned with the school Principal and planned to avoid certain key times during the year. Dates that are not advised could be related to scheduled district wide activities, specific school calendar events, Student final and provincial exams, term or semester end unit projects etc.
- **Risk Management:** The safety, security, supervision and well being of students must be the prime consideration when planning an excursion. Acting as a prudent parent, take whatever precautions are necessary to ensure the proper conduct, appropriate behavior and safety of students. Prior to submitting the **Field Trip Proposal** to the Principal, teachers must review the relevant **Field Trip Checklist** and Activity specific Guidelines for the type of trip they are planning.
 - **In each case teachers will:**
 - Identify all potential risks as well as foreseeable risks of injury associated with participating in a particular activity during the trip and develop a written safety plan to mitigate each risk to the greatest extent possible. Safety plans are outlined on the consent forms and for higher care trips, a **Risk Management Plan (Form 260-8)** is also required.

- Ensure that all Low Risk and Higher Care Field Trips have the appropriate number of qualified and experienced staff, service providers, or volunteer supervisors with the correct level of current First Aid and Activity Certification to lead the activity.
- Confirm any attending Volunteers have undergone a Criminal Record Check in accordance with the **Administrative Procedure 490 – Screening of Volunteers**.
- Store all Field Trip documents related to the approval, planning, and communication and written informed consent at the originating school to be retained on file for 7 years.
- **Parent/ Guardian Communication and Consent:** Ensure parents have been provided with comprehensive student information that clearly describes the educational benefits and safety risks of the field study, and safety plans;

Field Trip Supervisor Responsibility

Supervisors (teachers, volunteers, contracted instructors) are responsible to supervise students 24 hours per day as per a prudent parent would, to serve as role models to students, to act as ambassadors of the District and to conduct themselves accordingly, and within the expectations of, the District’s Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Students. No alcohol or non-prescription drugs are to be consumed while on, or before, supervising students, as supervisors must be capable of reasoned judgment in case of an unexpected emergency at all times during the field study. This expectation includes international locations where the cultural norms may vary.

School Administrator Responsibility

The Principal or designated administrator is responsible for the final approval of a Field Trip. For all Field Trip Proposals, the school Principal will review the **Field Trip Proposal** and ensure it is appropriately planned, authorized, organized, and supervised. On occasion it may be necessary for School Administrators to conduct a risk assessment and consider the ability of the teachers, volunteers and service providers, if applicable, to plan for and execute the safety plan prior to approving the Field Trip proposal. Final authorization for the Field Trip is obtained with the Principal's signature on the completed Field Trip approval documents confirming all requirements of the Field Trip policy have been met.

For Higher Care Field Trips (Category 4 or higher) the Principal or designated administrator is responsible for ensuring the Field Trip proposal documents are prepared for all multiple-day Field Trips and the proposal is evaluated, recommended, and submitted to the Superintendent *or Designate* for preliminary review and approval, prior to proceeding with planning, travel and scheduling arrangements, or initiating fund-raising. Additionally, for all out-of-country trips, the Principal will sign the permission for trip departure within seven (7) days of departure, after consideration of government-issued travel advisories for the destination.

Field Trips may be deemed to be inappropriate by the Principal. Inappropriate Field Trips are characterized as those involving:

- Activities that have significant risk for serious injury; (activities on the ‘prohibited’ list).
- Dangers that cannot be overlooked regardless of the attention to risk planning and mitigation (such as supervision ratios, equipment, instruction and supervisors/ instructors experience and training);

- Not age or developmentally appropriate for students, individually or as a group;
- Involve travel time that is excessive for the age of the children;
- Involve excessive absence from the school for both students and teachers;
- Incur inordinate expense;
- Include travel to areas where Foreign Affairs Canada has published a travel advisory;
- A failure to comply with general District Board policies or administrative procedures or legislation.

When considering approval of Field Trips, Administrators cannot justify activity choice and trip selection based upon a past history of success. Ongoing reassessment, particularly of programs that have been in place for a number of years, is necessary especially when it comes to safety. Past program decisions should not drive current program planning.

All Field Trip documents related to the approval, planning, communication, and written informed consent shall be stored at the originating school and retained on file. School Principals will keep the Superintendent's Office regularly informed of all student trips (by submitting Field Trip information on a regular basis to form part of the Superintendent's Reports to the Board.

The Superintendent or designate shall notify the Board in advance of any planned out-of-country multiple-day Field Trips.

F. STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

Any teacher with a concern about a particular student participating on a Field Trip (see criteria below) must see the sponsor teacher to try and resolve this problem. If this does not appear to be successful, consult the administrator at least two weeks in advance of the Field Trip so that they may have an opportunity to resolve the situation.

In all cases teachers will:

- Ensure Field Trips are physically accessible to all students in the class.
- Ensure that "ability to pay" is not a determining factor for student participation.
- Provide appropriate preparatory and follow-up instruction related to learning outcomes that are to be part of the field excursion plan.
- Make arrangements to provide an instructional program for students not participating in the excursion and a plan for the instruction of classes normally taught by teachers who will accompany students on the excursion.
- Make arrangements for all students with unique needs to be included in the Field Trip.

Potential Reasons for Exclusion:

- Scheduled term reviews create conflict, and alternate arrangements have not been made with the teacher.
- Assigned work from previous Field Trips was not completed.
- The student has excessive unexcused absences in the month prior to the trip.
- The student is currently under suspension or has been withdrawn for disciplinary reasons from participating in school events and activities.

G. TRANSPORTATION

The Principal must ensure that the transportation of pupils is in accordance with **Administrative Procedure 562 - Extra Curricular Student Trips**. Passenger and vehicle loading lists must be available in the school and with the supervisory person on the trip. Current and clear Driver's Abstracts must be available in the school as part of the **Volunteer Driver Application Form**. Booster seats are employed as required.

H. FINANCES

- Schools must be sensitive to the financial burden of possible expensive Field Trips; the ability of students to pay their share of the costs must not be a factor in determining participation. School personnel must ensure that financial requirements do not exclude students from participation on a Field Trip
- For Field Trips where a deposit fee is required by an outside agency, the School District will not be responsible for refunding deposits should the trip be cancelled.
- For all approved Field Trips, the School Board's liability insurance protects employees, the Board of Education and volunteers against suit in the event of an accident through negligence.
- Trip cancellation insurance must be purchased.

Reference: Sections 8, 17, 20, 22, 65, 85, 177 *School Act*

Adopted: January 10, 2024

Revised:



Appendix Section

<p>Table 1: Exceptions to Higher Care Field Trips</p>
<p>Certain activities in the <i>Restricted Field Trip Activities List</i> (Tab 1: <i>Table 2</i>) have less risk under certain controlled conditions. Therefore, while the nature of the activities in Table 2 are considered to be of moderate risk, the ability to plan for safety and respond are reasonable given the quality of the facility and support and/or the proximity to emergency care. As a result of this, teachers may use the Low Risk Field Trip specifications within this Policy, Regulation, and accompanying Administrative Procedures.</p>
<p>Table 2: Higher Care Activities With Restrictions</p>
<p>Restricted activities are allowed only under certain conditions where specific safety criteria are met. Extensive consideration must be given to the ability to plan for safety, the impact on instructional time, as well as risk assessment. A restricted activity is a type of Higher Care Field Trip.</p>
<p>Table 3: Prohibited Activities</p>
<p>Some types of activities have been prohibited based on risk assessment and ability to plan for safety, as well as consideration given to impact on instructional time, inordinate costs, and/or excessive travel. These activities may also have severe consequences that flow from the inherent risks of the activity and the probability of occurrence of these risks cannot be reasonably eliminated.</p>
<p>Non- Sanctioned Trips and Activities</p>
<p>Non-sanctioned trips and activities are those that are not endorsed or supported by the School District in any way. District staff may, as individuals, participate in student-packaged tours or interest based excursions, provided that it is understood to be a non-sanctioned event, and it is made clear to the parents and students that the staff member is taking part on a personal basis and that the school or the Board of Education is in no way involved.</p>

Safety Regulations for Swimming Activities

- 1.1. In planning swimming activities schools work with an aquatic service provider, such as a community pool or camp that provides Life Guards. Aquatic best practice calls for at least two certified Life Guards for every 25 swimmers in such facilities.
- 1.2. Where working with a service provider, the Educator in Charge remains responsible for coordinating the activity, ensuring informed parental/guardian consent, securing sufficient numbers of assistants to help supervise the activity, and working with the service provider facility.
- 1.3. Parents/guardians should identify the student's approximate aquatic skill level to facilitate securing sufficient numbers of Lifeguards, supervisors and/or instructors as part of the informed consent process.
- 1.4. Before being permitted to swim in water above their chest height without a PFD the students must be given a **survival swim test**, or an **endurance swim test**.

As outlined in Youth Safe Outdoors:

- the survival swim test consists of: a roll into deep water, treading water for 1 minute and swimming 50m using any method.
- the endurance test only includes the 50m swim.

Whichever test is used, it will generally be conducted by venue staff and can be used to channel students into appropriate level swimming lessons. If the swim is a recreational outing, the successful students can be given an identifying mark on their arm, or an identification tag or ribbon. Those not taking or passing the test may also be given a marker (of different colour or design to distinguish them to lifeguards and supervisors).

- 1.5. Unless in a structured swimming class (i.e., small group with designated instructor) all non-swimmers or weak swimmers should wear a PFD when in or near the water or they must be restricted to a well-marked shallow area (less than chest height).
- 1.6. All rules and regulations of the swimming area, diving area, swing ropes, pool slides, waterslides, hot tubs/steam rooms/saunas, change rooms and/or other related facilities in the aquatic must be presented to the students and followed. This rule review may be done by the venue staff and the Educator in Charge is to confirm arrangements.
- 1.7. Supervision of Swimming
 - 1.7.1. Change/locker rooms must be appropriately supervised in consideration of the age and maturity of students.
 - 1.7.2. For recreational swimming in an exclusive use context, a head counting system should be used at regular intervals, particularly with larger groups;

- 1.7.3. For recreational swimming, students should swim with a buddy of comparable swimming ability and should buddy up quickly on command. Students should know the consequences of not swimming with their buddy (e.g., a 5-minute time out on deck).
- 1.7.4. Generally, when students aged eight or older are in the water, and especially with larger groups, some adult supervisors should remain out of the water and position themselves so that the students are in clear sight (i.e., supervisors distributed around swimming area and standing at or near the waterline).
- 1.7.5. When students under age eight are in the water, instructors/supervisors (not Lifeguards) must be in the water with them.
- 1.7.6. Supervision ratio is supported by certified Lifeguard(s) as per the number/ratio determined by the Facility Manager for supervision of the particular facility and bather load.
- 1.7.7. The suggested minimum supervisor to student ratios for are: K – 3 (1:6 / 2:12) 4 – 7 (1:10 / 2:20) 8 – 12 (1:15 / 2:30) Adjust supervision ratio if/as necessary due to the presence of any special considerations.

2. Additional Protocols for Higher Risk Aquatic Swimming Activities;

Many school groups find themselves with opportunities to take advantage of one or more aquatic environments that differ from aquatic service providers outlined above. Some examples may include swimming in a hotel pool while on a band trip, swimming at a beach, swimming in a lake at the end of the day while on a canoe trip, or an aquatic context that relies upon Lifesavers and other supervisory systems versus certified, qualified Lifeguards (National Lifeguard Service - NLS) to support the group.

- 2.1. Higher Risk Swimming Activities include hotel swimming pools, open water (lake or ocean) and remote contexts. An activity that involves swimming or wading in a river, lake or ocean at a site that is not designated swimming area, must be treated as a higher care activity.
- 2.2. Students are appropriately supervised (considering age, maturity and context). In addition, the supervision guidelines in 25 are applied. Higher Risk aquatic activities are not supported for K-3.
- 2.3. The teacher/leader must be competent to organize the swimming activity; to demonstrate, instruct and supervise it; and to effect rescue and emergency procedures as necessary, or to otherwise provide for any or all of these functions and capacities (e.g., using a service provider, Lifeguard or Lifesaver). Where working with a service provider (e.g., hotel), the Educator in Charge will be involved in coordinating the activity, ensuring informed parental/guardian consent, securing sufficient numbers of assistants to help supervise the activity, and working with the service provider to ensure the group's needs are met. A certified Lifesaver or comparably trained person is required to supervise the aquatic environment and group. In determining the number of Lifesavers needed, consider the size and configuration of the

environment (e.g., number of pools, sight lines); group size, student grade/age, and swimming ability.

2.4. Those serving as Lifesavers must:

- Have CPR training (any level). Standard level first aid training is also recommended;
- Be trained in the facility operating and emergency procedures, or be able to develop appropriate safety and emergency plans for a site to be used for an incidental swimming activity;
- Have a Bronze Medallion, be a minimum of 16 year of age and be at least two years older than the students being supervised.

2.5. Parents/guardians must:

- Be notified of the supervisory arrangements.
- Acknowledge awareness of the potential hazards associated with the swimming/wading/water park activity, and
- Consent to their child's participation.

Parents/guardians should identify the student's approximate aquatic skill level to facilitate securing sufficient numbers of lifesavers, supervisors and/or instructors.

2.6. Swimming, wading or other aquatic activities should never be allowed as an impromptu activity for which there is no safety or emergency plan and for which the parents/ guardians and principal or designate have not approved.

2.7. The swimming area must be clearly marked, free from hazards, roped off with floating devices or boundaries otherwise clear, and reasonably clean (i.e., not polluted).

2.8. 2.8 Students must not dive head first from the pool edge (or other similar surface close to the water level), unless the water at that point has a minimum depth at least 2.5 meters.

2.9. Duration of swim should consider the type (age, skill level) of swimmers, temperature and condition of water, time of day, and objectives of the activity.

2.10. Swimming in moving rivers or streams should only be undertaken if the Lifesaver assesses the conditions and group and deems them sufficiently safe to proceed as per Youth Safe Outdoors guidelines.

2.11. Persons assuming Lifesaver responsibilities should be clearly visible and identifiable.

2.12. Where a particular off-site experience involves a water-based activity (e.g., canoeing), parents/guardians should be asked to verify the student's level of swimming training/skill.

2.13. No swimming after dark.

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- 2.14. No distance swims in open water except where this is part of a specific planned swimming or triathlon program and informed parental/guardian consent has been secured. Appropriate rescue craft must be provided.
- 2.15. Students should know an emergency signal and response.
- 2.16. An emergency action plan should be in place specific to the activity and environment.