

OUTDOOR TRAVEL / ACTIVITIES

Background

The purpose of outdoor travel/activities is to promote a healthy lifestyle and develop knowledge, awareness and respect for the outdoors. Such travel and activity shall be conducted in a safe manner, and will be linked to classroom or school objectives or a school club or team.

This Administrative Procedure is in addition to other Board policies and administrative procedures regarding student travel.

Definition

Outdoor travel/activities shall refer to any student trip in which the major purpose is to engage in activities commonly associated with the outdoors, excluding walking, track and field events, and cross-country running.

Procedures

1. Environmental Impact
 - 1.1. Principals shall strive for “zero-impact” when engaging in outdoor travel/activities, and supervisors shall instruct and direct students in strategies and techniques designed to eliminate or minimize environmental impact during and prior to the trip.
2. Planning and Preparation
 - 2.1. Employees shall ensure that the challenge of a particular trip or activity is age-appropriate to students and within the knowledge, skill and expertise of the supervisors.
 - 2.2. Employees shall ensure that students and parents have been given all necessary instruction and direction regarding clothing requirements, use of equipment, materials, and related gear, and the necessity to follow adult direction.
 - 2.3. Employees are encouraged to seek advice and assistance from other qualified staff who are experienced in such travel.
 - 2.4. Employees shall be knowledgeable about the route, location and terrain of the areas they will be visiting and will consult weather forecasting agencies prior to embarking on the trip. At least one supervisor shall have completed the trip prior to student travel/activities.
 - 2.5. Employees shall be aware of any student medical conditions and plans to address those concerns.
 - 2.6. For some designated activities, an appropriate number of supervisors and/or instructors must be fully qualified to teach and lead the activities.

- 2.7. Authorization by the Director of Instruction Health and Safety is required for the highest risk activities of: mountain biking, canoeing/kayaking, skiing/snowboarding, technical climbing and rowing/sailing.
- 2.8. All relevant District forms, especially the *Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk* (form 260-05), shall be used at all times.
- 2.9. Administrators must review travel and safety plans for all back-country field trips, and maintain a written copy of such plans, including maps, contact numbers, frequencies, and all required certification (first aid, canoe/kayak).

3. Supervision and First Aid

- 3.1. Adult supervision levels are dependent upon the nature of the activity and are determined by the Principal after consultation with appropriate staff, but shall always include at least two adult supervisors, one of which shall be an employee of the District.

3.1.1. Minimum level of adult supervision for outdoor travel/activities:

*one adult supervisor for every ten students, with at least one supervisor being a District employee
*In extenuating circumstances the above supervision minimums may be waived through consultation by the Superintendent.

- 3.1.2. On-site personnel may be included as supervisors, depending on the nature of the activity.

- 3.2. School protocol shall communicate the roles and responsibilities for each supervisor or chaperone.
- 3.3. At least one adult supervisor or site-based staff shall have either previous experience/training in first aid relevant to the activity to be undertaken or a current first aid ticket. The length, difficulty, route or destination of a trip shall determine the degree of first aid competence and the numbers of first aid responders, in accordance with the following certification levels:

Single-day / 24-hour trip	- Standard First Aid OR - St. John's or Red Cross (or equivalent) Wilderness First Aid
Multi-day trip	- St. John's or Red Cross (or equivalent) Advanced Wilderness First Aid

- 3.4. For the purposes of this Administrative Procedure, appropriately trained secondary school students may qualify as first aid persons, but not as general adult supervisors.
- 3.5. For each activity, first aid kits shall be checked to ensure that they are appropriately supplied for the outing, and carried for ready use. Depending on the nature of the activity, more than one first aid kit may be required.

3.6. First aid kits stocked with supplies designed for wilderness or remote travel shall be kept and maintained at each secondary school (defined as those enrolling grade 11 and 12 students).

4. Permission to Travel and Parental Notification

4.1. The Principal shall approve each trip. For activities involving overnight camping, staff shall develop and complete a checklist, trip itinerary and emergency contingency plan, and submit it to the Principal.

4.2. In all cases, signed parent permission slips are required. Pre-meetings with parents are required for overnight camping for elementary students, and may be required by the Principal for activities at middle/junior or secondary schools. If pre-meetings are not held, a letter/form to parents is required which describes the trip, and provides an itinerary, regulations for students, supervision levels, transportation details, and any risks associated with the trip.

4.3. These trips and activities require reasonable planning time, i.e. early communication with parents seeking support, sufficient time for criminal record check procedures, time for parents' advisory council (PAC) to effectively support the endeavour, time to organize materials and equipment, etc.

5. Communication

5.1. Properly functioning communications equipment appropriate to the nature and complexity of the trip shall be taken on each activity. Personal locator beacons (PLBs), such as "The Spot" are highly recommended, as VHF and cellular coverage cannot always be guaranteed in the event of an emergency.

6. Codes of Conduct

6.1. The school's code of conduct and relevant Board policies and administrative procedures shall be in effect on all outdoor travel/activities.

6.2. Students and staff shall be aware of and follow the codes of conduct established by external agencies and/or staff of outdoor sites, centres or facilities, provincial/ national parks and/or the forest service, including the instruction and/or direction of the staff.

6.3. Possession of knives and similar objects used specifically for outdoor education purposes only shall not be addressed by **Administrative Procedure 357 – Possession or Use of Weapons**.

7. Specific Activities

In addition to the above procedures, specific requirements for some travel/activities are as follows.

7.1. Cycling – Road and Mountain

7.1.1. Cycling activities will be conducted during daylight hours only, and shall be concluded one hour before daylight ends.

7.1.2. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their children's bicycles are properly maintained. Staff may deny student participation if the bike is not in good working order.

- 7.1.3. Mountain biking shall occur only on existing and recognized trails approved by the Supervisor who shall be familiar with the level of difficulty and the skill level of the students.
- 7.1.4. All students and staff shall wear bicycle helmets that meet Canadian safety standards for the activity as well as other safety equipment appropriate to the activity.
- 7.1.5. All cyclists shall ride in single file on the right hand side of the road, and follow all traffic signs and regulations. There shall be no more than thirty in each group with appropriate spacing every ten cyclists. Adult supervisors shall ride at the front and rear of the entire group.
- 7.1.6. For road cycling on Denman or Hornby islands, school groups shall not proceed until all car traffic from the ferry has unloaded and left the dock area.
- 7.1.7. Groups of thirty or more travelling to the Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre are required to contact the Centre regarding transportation issues well before the itinerary is set.
- 7.1.8. The District **Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk Form (Form 260-05)** shall be used.
- 7.2. Skateboarding, Longboarding, and/or Rollerblading
 - 7.2.1. Participation in these activities will be planned instruction only, or an organized extra-curricular activity.
 - 7.2.2. All participants shall wear approved safety gear (helmet, knee pads, elbow pads).
 - 7.2.3. Supervision shall be appropriate to the number of students participating.
 - 7.2.4. Participation shall be limited to confined areas (e.g. on school site, or at an approved boarding/blading facility).
 - 7.2.5. The skill levels or expertise of the participants shall be inventoried prior to the activity, and a plan of skills to be developed or reinforced be put in place by the teacher/supervisor.
 - 7.2.6. The District **Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk Form (Form 260-05)** shall be used.
- 7.3. Camping and Hiking
 - 7.3.1. Hiking will be conducted during daylight hours only, and shall be concluded one hour before daylight ends.
 - 7.3.2. Hiking groups shall have at least one adult supervisor who holds qualifications appropriate to the hike leading and following the group.
 - 7.3.3. The Principal will determine which of the District consent forms are to be used.
- 7.4. Canoeing and Kayaking
 - 7.4.1. Canoe and kayak activities shall have one supervisor for every five student participants (1:5), will be conducted during daylight hours only, and shall be concluded one hour before daylight ends. Up to two (2) such supervisors may be trained senior secondary school students for groups of 20 students or more.

- 7.4.2. A personal floatation device with an attached sound-signalling device is required to be worn by each participant.
- 7.4.3. Canoe and kayak trips for elementary and middle/junior schools shall be limited to *Class One* water which is defined as “gentle tours in non-challenging, protected waters with limited wind effect, little or no current, easy landings and close to land-based assistance.”
 - 7.4.3.1. Canoe and kayak trips for secondary schools shall be limited to *Class Two* water which is defined as “tours in lightly populated areas with short crossings, moderate potential wind effects, gentle to moderate non-turbulent currents, easy to moderate landings, and light surf beaches.”
- 7.4.4. Flares shall be included for canoe and kayak trips beyond areas used for instruction in protected waters.
- 7.4.5. Canoes shall be buoyant, have towlines at the bow and stern, a spare paddle and a bailing device.
- 7.4.6. Kayaks shall be buoyant, have a spray skirt for each kayak cockpit, and a bailing device. Group leaders shall have spare paddles and rope for towing.
- 7.4.7. Staff shall be at the front and rear of each group which shall stay together and not string out.
- 7.4.8. For canoe trips, at least one supervisor shall have at least the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (CRCA) Canoeing Level II certification.
- 7.4.9. Similarly, for kayak trips, at least one supervisor shall have at least the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (CRCA) Sea Kayaking Level II certification.
- 7.4.10. The District **Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk Form (Form 260-05)** shall be used.
- 7.5. Skiing, Snowshoeing or Snowboarding
 - 7.5.1. For snowshoeing and cross-country skiing, qualified adult supervisors shall lead and follow each group.
 - 7.5.1.1. The District **Field Trip Consent Form (Form 260-04)** shall be used for these activities.
 - 7.5.2. For downhill skiing and snowboarding, District employees shall provide supervision and closely monitor student activity.
 - 7.5.2.1. The District **Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk Form (Form 260-05)** shall be used for downhill skiing and snowboarding.
 - 7.5.3. Snow tubing, natural luge and tobogganing are permitted in an approved area and under controlled conditions.
 - 7.5.4. Bobsled, “sled” luge and biathlon activities are not permitted without authorization by the Superintendent prior to planning.
 - 7.5.5. Snowmobile activities are not permitted.
 - 7.5.6. All downhill skiers and snowboarders must wear approved helmets.

7.6. Spelunking

- 7.6.1. Spelunking trips shall have one supervisor for every seven (7) students.
- 7.6.2. Each trip must be led by a qualified guide.
- 7.6.3. All participants shall wear helmets and have a reliable source of light. Supervisors and/or guides shall have back-up lights for student participants.
- 7.6.4. The District **Field Trip Consent Form (Form 260-04)** shall be used.

7.7. Technical Climbing (Ropes)

- 7.7.1. Technical climbing activities are to be conducted during daylight hours only, and shall be concluded one hour before daylight ends .
- 7.7.2. A qualified instructor must be present per two ropes and provide specific instruction in belaying and climbing techniques. A second “guide” shall be approved by the qualified instructor so there is one “guide” per rope. Participants are to stay close together.
- 7.7.3. Technical climbing shall take place only when the specific purpose of the activity is climbing, not as part of a hiking trip or some other activity.
- 7.7.4. The District **Field Trip Consent Form (Form 260-04)** shall be used.

7.8. Water Activities (excluding canoes, kayaks)

- 7.8.1. Outdoor swimming shall be conducted during daylight hours only, and shall be concluded one hour before daylight ends, in safe conditions, within five meters of shore, and with active supervision. Swimming beyond five meters is only permitted in the presence of a trained and certified lifeguard.
 - 7.8.1.1. The District **Field Trip Consent Form (Form 260-04)** shall be used.
- 7.8.2. Rowing and sailing activities require experienced and trained supervision on the water, with participants wearing approved personal floatation devices. Rowing and sailing shall be concluded one hour before daylight ends.
 - 7.8.2.1. The District **Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk Form (Form 260-05)** shall be used.
- 7.8.3. Diving, surfing, body surfing, boarding, scuba diving, jet skiing, and water-skiing are not permitted.
- 7.8.4. Swimming in pools shall follow all posted regulations for the pool and include active adult supervision at all times.
 - 7.8.4.1. The District **Field Trip Consent Form (Form 260-04)** shall be used.

7.9. Ice Skating

- 7.9.1. All skaters must wear approved helmets when skating, whether indoors or outdoors, and other safety equipment appropriate to the activity.
 - 7.9.1.1. The District **Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk Form (Form 260-05)** shall be used.

8. High-Risk Activities

- 8.1. Activities that pose substantial risk, or are not components of a recognized curriculum or club or sport activity are not permitted. Examples include, but are not limited to, bungy jumping, para-sailing, parachuting, gliding, hang-gliding.

9. Work Experience Travel/Activity

- 9.1. Travel primarily for work experience credit shall not be considered part of this Administrative Procedure.

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

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