



### **FIELD TRIPS/EXCURSIONS – NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL**

#### **Background**

Participation by students in special events such as field trips, athletic competitions, music and drama festivals and student exchanges can significantly complement the educational program. While field trips and excursions have positive educational value, care must be taken to ensure that trips or excursions are organized in a manner that maximizes educational benefit and ensures the protection and safety of students.

The Division supports the practice of conducting co-curricular and extra-curricular educational field trips, excursions and exchanges.

#### **Procedures**

1. Excursions that are not directly sponsored by a school or the Division are the responsibility of the planners, tour agencies, and transportation agencies involved. Private trips or Travel Clubs not sponsored by the Division must have a disclaimer notice sent to parents. School staff must be advised that they must not in any way be involved, even on an advisory basis, in such field trips/excursions.
2. Field trips sponsored by the school or Division are to:
  - 2.1 Have sufficient educational value to outweigh the loss of instructional time.
  - 2.2 Be supervised to ensure acceptable levels of student behaviour and safety at all times.
  - 2.3 Be organized in a manner that conforms to Division policy and procedures regarding student department, transportation and use of private vehicles; and
  - 2.4 National and International field trips may be limited to the following:
    - 2.4.1 Students are enrolled in a second language course during the same calendar year as the scheduled international field trip; and the field trip is linked to that second language course;
    - 2.4.2 Athletic competition;
    - 2.4.3 Fine Arts competition and performance.
3. Travel Clubs are not approved field trips.



4. All staff and authorized supervisors are protected by the Division's liability insurance when acting within the scope of their duties as approved by the Principal. With respect to liability coverage:
  - 4.1 Coverage is normally effective only for activities held within Canada or the continental U.S.A. Contact must be made with the Superintendent or Secretary-Treasurer for advice concerning insurance coverage beyond these borders. It is incumbent upon the staff organizer to contact the Secretary-Treasurer to ensure that adequate insurance is in place; and
  - 4.2 When using a vehicle, e.g. private bus, other than an approved carrier to transport children, the Principal must make certain that the vehicle/carrier is approved by Division Office, has adequate insurance and the driver is appropriately licensed.
5. Teachers are expected to submit a plan (Form 261-1) for a field trip/excursion to the Principal for approval and for final submission to the Board including all of the following criteria:
  - 5.1 Experience is an integral part or extension of the curricular program;
  - 5.2 Extent to which the trip will interfere with the student's entire educational program;
  - 5.3 Field trip/excursion budget;
  - 5.4 Type of transportation required;
  - 5.5 Itinerary outlining approximate times at which the field trip/excursion will be conducted at specific locations and must be followed;
  - 5.6 Numbers and names of adults who will attend as supervisors; the proposed level or ratio of supervision, and the number and names of students participating in the excursion.
  - 5.7 Information must be included related to safety procedures and medical procedures for those that may require such;
  - 5.8 Thorough review of excluded activities;
  - 5.9 Estimate of the costs associated with the trip for parents and for the Division;
  - 5.10 Review of staff and liability implications;
  - 5.11 For a field trip/excursion that involves being away on a Sunday, the group shall make every effort to attend Mass. If this is impossible, the group shall participate in a religious celebration that they can arrange; and
  - 5.12 The field trip proposal must be submitted to the Board **at least three (3) months prior** to departure for National trips and **at least six (6) months prior** to departure for International trips.



6. The Principal is responsible for ensuring all Division approved field trip forms and templates are used and fully completed in preparing the field trip package. Completed field trip packages are submitted to Division Office.
7. Approval for the field trip/excursion may be granted with the following conditions:
  - 7.1 Cancellation of the field trip/excursion could occur up to departure based upon:
    - 7.1.1 Travel advisory information from the Federal Government of Canada.
    - 7.1.2 Cancellation of insurance by the Division's carrier based upon associated risks at the time of travel.
    - 7.1.3 Cancellation by Board.
  - 7.2 Parents are notified by letter indicating the following:
    - 7.2.1 The purpose or educational goal of the excursion;
    - 7.2.2 The itinerary of the trip;
    - 7.2.3 A description of the activities or events proposed;
    - 7.2.4 Safety precautions in place to deal with activities involving known risks;
    - 7.2.5 Emergency procedures to be followed in the event of injury, illness or unusual circumstance;
    - 7.2.6 The requirement of additional medical coverage and other types of insurance such as trip cancellation, and loss of property including cash.
    - 7.2.7 All travel arrangements;
    - 7.2.8 Supervision arrangements;
    - 7.2.9 All costs associated with the trip;
    - 7.2.10 Any supplies, equipment or documentation students must supply;
    - 7.2.11 Accommodations or billeting arrangements.
  - 7.3 Parents must sign a written consent form and waiver form acknowledging that the trip may be cancelled by the Board at any time without any cost to the Board.



- 7.4 The Principal signs the approval form acknowledging that any associated costs not covered will be charged to their school's school generated funds.
  - 7.5 Should a proposed field trip/excursion not be approved by the Board, the Board shall notify all staff involved in the proposal, and all parents of students listed as participants in the trip, that the trip was not approved and that the Board will be absolved of all liabilities incurred if parents proceed with the trip on their own. Staff will be informed through letter that they must not be involved in the trip even an advisory manner in the trip.
8. Supervision:
- 8.1 All field trips/excursions must be under the direct supervision of at least one (1) teacher, although parents and other volunteers may be considered agents of the Board for insurance purposes;
  - 8.2 Both male and female supervisors will be provided for overnight (or longer) co-educational field trips;
  - 8.3 The teacher is responsible for ensuring an acceptable level of student discipline is maintained;
  - 8.4 A minimum of one (1) supervisor per school bus must be provided when students are being transported to and from the field trip destination;
  - 8.5 Everyone involved in the trip or excursion must be dressed/equipped in a manner appropriate to the activities to be undertaken;
  - 8.6 Employees are expected to comply with the Division's Drug and Alcohol Administrative Procedure at all times while on field trips; and
  - 8.7 The teacher is responsible for being aware of, and making provision for, the special health needs of students that can be accommodated.
9. Field Trip documentation:
- 9.1 Schools shall keep a record of field trip documentation for two (2) years from the end date of the field trip.
  - 9.2 Any documentation relating to a field trip upon which a Student Injury/Incident Report Form was completed shall be kept until the date upon which the student or students named in the Student Injury/Incident Report Form all reach twenty one (21) years of age.



10. Field trip documentation shall include, but is not necessary limited to the following:

- 10.1 All forms relating to the field trip: principal and superintendent authorizations, waivers, consents, disclosures, informed consents, acknowledgement of risks.
- 10.2 Completed returned parent forms.
- 10.3 List of participating students.
- 10.4 Completed Student Injury/Incident Report Forms.
- 10.5 Agendas, minutes and attendance records from all field trip meetings, including parent and supervision meetings.
- 10.6 Copies of all correspondence, receipts, booking confirmation relating to the field trip including supervision schedules.
- 10.7 Any information distributed to parents, students, teachers, supervisors and volunteers about the field trip.

Reference: Section 1, 11, 31, 32, 32, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222 Education Act  
Traffic Safety Act  
Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools  
Safety Guidelines for Secondary Inter-School Athletics in Alberta  
Physical Education Safety Guidelines