



<b>SECTION:</b>	<b>General School Administration</b>	<b>APPROVAL DATE:</b>
<b>SUBSECTION:</b>	<b>School Building Administration</b>	<b>September 2, 2008</b>
<b>POLICY NAME:</b>	<b>Out of School Trips and Excursions</b>	<b>LAST REVISED:</b>
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	<b>R.GSA.E.22</b>	<b>September 2, 2008</b>

1. DEFINITION: OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Out-of-School programs include a wide range of activities such as walking excursions to local sites; visits to learning centers such as the Ontario Science Center, museums and conservation areas; retreat programs at various centers; community service projects; athletic events and tournaments; and extended excursions in this country and beyond its borders. The Board recognizes the educational value of all these experiences and encourages them.

Excursions are categorized as follows:

Use of Local Sites: These sites are those to which students walk from the school.

School Programs offered at a different location: These excursions are regularly scheduled events and may require transportation to the site.

Curricular; Extra-Curricular; Co-Curricular Activities: These take place off school property and may require transportation. (e.g., sports tournaments, choir or band rehearsals or performances). These are not normally of a duration of more than one day but they may involve overnight or extended travel.

One Day Out-of-School Activities: These are to a facility offering a program and to which transportation is required.

Extended Out-of-School Programs Within Canada: These involve overnight stays and transportation to the site.

Extended Out-of-School Programs Outside Canada: These involve overnight stays, transportation to the site and departing Canadian soil.

2. EDUCATIONAL GOALS

The following broad objectives should be considered by a teacher planning any Out-of-School programs or activities:

- \* To gather data from primary sources;
- \* To obtain direct experiences of a phenomenon, process, operation or enterprise;
- \* To observe practical applications of topics studied in theory;
- \* To provide aesthetic, religious, cultural, team building or athletic experiences.

3. CRITERIA OF EDUCATIONAL VALIDITY

The educational validity of activities undertaken beyond the school shall be ensured by the Principal according to the following criteria:

- a) the experience lies within the competency and/or understanding of the students involved;
- b) the experience has a curricular relevance for the group of students concerned;
- c) the experience has educational objectives which have been clearly defined by the teacher;
- d) the experience has educational value in proportion to the time spent travelling;
- e) no equally effective alternative to exists within the normal school organization.

4. APPROVAL PROCESS

Day Trips Approval

1. the Principal (Vice-Principal) shall approve a request for a day field trip while considering the following:
2. the stated educational value and safety precautions proposed
3. the cost to the students
4. the impact upon parents
5. the effect upon the regular school program
6. any potential problems
7. budget limitations
8. any other factors considered relevant
9. parental consent must be confirmed in writing before any student is allowed to participate in any day trip

Overnight Trips Approval

1. The two applications for approval of an overnight field trip will be made by the principal and forwarded to the appropriate superintendent. The initial application process will be completed two months prior to the proposed trip. These excursions will be reported to the Board one month prior to their departure date.
2. The superintendent may refer the initial request to the Board for review if the request is considered unusual because of the distance involved or any other factor considered compelling.
3. When reviewing the initial request for approval, the superintendent will consider the following factors:
  - 3.1 The safety of the students
  - 3.2 The estimated cost to students and Board
  - 3.3 The educational value of the trip and relationship to curriculum
  - 3.4 The effect upon the regular school program
  - 3.5 Equity of opportunity for all students who want to participate in such trips
  - 3.6 Any other factors considered relevant.
4. When the initial request for an overnight field trip has been given approval, the principal shall monitor the detailed planning. Trip supervisors should come from the teachers and/or administrators who are most directly connected to the excursion from a program perspective. Parents and non-teaching spouses can also be utilized as supervisors in cases where they are needed to top up the coverage ratio.
5. The principal shall ensure that the following information is available:
  - 5.1 The names of participating students
  - 5.2 The names of the adult supervisors and any and all adults who will be accompanying the students and Board staff
  - 5.3 The name of the teacher in charge of the trip
  - 5.4 A complete itinerary of the trip including phone numbers
  - 5.5 A description of arrangements made to minimize the impact of the trip upon the regular school program
  - 5.6 Final cost to students and Board.

- 5.7 Disclosure of any rewards contributed by outside carriers and an explanation of the manner in which they were distributed. Any monetary rewards must be used to subsidize the cost of the excursion for the students.

5. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Day Trips

It is the responsibility of the Principal/Vice Principal and his/her staff to ensure the following:

1. that the proposed field trip is an integral and valuable part of the total learning experience planned for the students
2. that sufficient preparation and follow-up activities are planned and carried out to ensure maximum educational value for the students
3. that adequate safety precautions are planned and implemented
4. that parents are fully informed about the trip, its purpose, and the activities planned.
5. that parents have given written consent for their child's participation
6. that students who do not receive written parental consent do not participate

Overnight Trips

It is the responsibility of the principal and the staff to ensure the following:

1. That the proposed overnight field trip is curriculum based and is a valued and integral component of the total learning experience planned for the students.
2. That adequate preparatory and follow-up activities are planned and carried out to ensure maximum educational value for participating students.
3. That appropriate safety precautions are planned and implemented.
4. That parents are fully informed about the trip, its purpose and educational activities planned. The information provided will include:
  - the educational value and cost of the field trip
  - the itinerary and telephone numbers
  - any special activities which are included
  - pertinent regulations on student conduct
5. arrangements to supplement medical insurance outside Canada
6. a description of any major difference, known to the principal, in health insurance legislation in any jurisdiction involved.
7. a trip manifest which contains the following:
  - telephone numbers to be used in emergencies
    - name, address and telephone of family doctor
    - health card number, and if appropriate, the identification number for supplementary insurance
    - description of any medical problems
    - direction for use of any medication that the student may require
    - a signed consent form authorizing the student's participation on the field trip and accepting responsibility for costs involved in sending a student home because of serious misconduct or illness. Those costs shall include the expenses incurred by any supervisor who accompanies the student.

7. SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

Day Trips

1. Sufficient adult supervision must be provided. The following may be considered as a minimum guideline; circumstances may increase these ratios.

<u>Division</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
Primary	1 adult for every 8 students
Junior	1 adult for every 10 students
Intermediate	1 adult for every 12 students
Senior	1 adult for every 15 students

2. The teacher should become as familiar as necessary with the areas to be visited before the field trip takes place.
3. Students must receive adequate instruction beforehand where the area to be visited might pose special safety problems. Students must be made aware of situations where persons other than their teacher might be in charge.
4. Adequate precautions must be taken to ensure that medical assistance is readily available. If the trip is to an isolated area, first aid materials must be available and enough people trained in first aid must be on the trip. Communication technology must also be available.
5. The teacher in charge of the trip must be aware of any special medical problems which any student may have and be prepared to cope with them.

#### Overnight Trips

1. Only students in the intermediate and senior divisions participate in overnight field trips.
2. Sufficient adult supervisors must accompany students. The following ratios should be considered as guidelines, recognizing that the actual ratios will depend upon specific circumstances.
  - a) For students in grades 7 to 10 - One adult for every 10 students
  - b) For students in grades 11 to OAC - One adult for every 12 students.
3. A minimum of 2/3's of the adult supervisors must be teachers.
4. When participating students are of mixed gender, both male and female supervisors must accompany students.
5. First aid materials must be available during the trip and first aid qualifications (St. John's Ambulance, Red Cross, CPR) must be held by someone in the party.
6. The Principal and the Vice-Principal, or the teacher-in-charge, may not both go on an overnight field trip without the specific approval of the appropriate superintendent.
7. The Principal shall ensure that students on the trip carry identification and shall ensure that the teacher in charge of the trip has a complete list of all persons involved and the pertinent information provided by the parent. Where possible that list shall indicate to which vehicle the persons have been assigned. A copy of the list shall be kept at the school and by the appropriate superintendent until the trip has been completed.
8. On the departure date, if the Principal has concerns about the weather or any other factor which could affect the safety of the students, the appropriate superintendent shall be consulted before a decision is made to proceed.
9. Only approved and licensed carriers should be used to transport students on overnight field trips.
10. Students must receive adequate instruction beforehand on safety precautions to be taken during the trip.

#### 8. OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS NOT OFFICIALLY APPROVED

Teachers should not become involved in trips with students from their school unless the trip is officially approved. Teachers are deemed by law to have authority over students by virtue of their positions as teachers. Teachers involved in non-approved trips surrender their legal claim to the Board's Liability Insurance coverage and to Worker's Compensation Benefits. If teachers choose to conduct non-approved trips with students from their own or other schools (e.g., March Break Ski Trip, Graduation Parties), then they are advised to take out substantial personal liability insurance policies.

#### 9. STUDENT HOLIDAY TRAVEL

- 9.1 Commercial agencies offer student excursions with no formal curricular link during the Christmas break and/or the mid-winter break and/or the summer break. Commercial agencies also offer Ministry-approved credit courses during the Christmas break and/or the mid-winter break and/or the summer break. The Wellington Catholic District School Board and its schools are not sponsors of, and assume no liability for, these commercial trips or any trips organized by parents only. Schools should be vigilant of such trips to ensure that in no way are they endorsed by the school nor has the school handed out material to promote such

events.

#### 10. FUNDS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- 10.1 Costs may be subsidized from the "school budget".
- 10.2 Grants are available from Provincial and Federal Government sources – only where a student exchange is to take place. Within Ontario, contact the Ontario Ministry of Education, Special Projects Branch (416-325-2660). Within other parts of Canada, for groups of 10 to 25 participants aged from 14 to 22 years, contact: Open House Canada, Department of the Secretary of State Youth Participation Directorate, Ottawa, ON K1A 0M5
- 10.3 Student Fund Raising projects may be used to provide additional funds. These projects must be undertaken with discretion and principal approval.
- 10.4 Direct charges to students who will participate in a program are permitted for non-curricular or co-curricular activities. Advance planning and restraint are suggested in this area.
- 10.5 Banking of funds raised by students or collected from students must be done in a school bank account, authorized by a minimum of two signatures - **NEVER IN A TEACHER'S PERSONAL ACCOUNT.**
- 10.6 Every effort should be made to ensure that no child is excluded from a class activity because of an inability to pay *or their particular exceptionalities*. Exceptions in the case of foreign travel will be discussed with the Superintendent.
- 10.7 If any activity is cancelled, monies collected from students will be returned in full.
- 10.8 For trips where students bear some part or all of the cost, it is expected that a full costing of the out-of-school activity will be presented to the parents/guardians, principal and superintendent when approval is sought. Any monetary rewards must be used to subsidize the cost of the excursion for the students.

#### 11. PARENTAL/GUARDIAN APPROVAL

- 11.1 A general consent will be obtained annually giving parental/guardian approval for walking excursions to local sites and school programs offered at an alternate school site which do not involve overnight stays or extended travel. A letter should be sent home containing the details of such activities. It should be typed and signed by the Principal and the teacher or another adult delegated by the Principal.
- 11.2 Care will be taken in wording permission letters in order to ensure/guardians understand the content of the form. This is especially important in the case of children from homes where English is not the primary language.
- 11.3 Teachers will not deviate from an approved itinerary or program except when required for emergency or safety reasons. If an alternative program or destination is being considered, then this should be part of the original plan which is submitted to the parents/guardians. If a group's return is significantly delayed, then the teacher will telephone the school and the school will notify the parents/guardians.
- 11.4 For programs extending overnight, the teacher will seek relevant medical information about each student and also permission to seek medical attention in the event of an emergency. The trip manifest needs to give the names and contact information for all students along with any specific medical references. Provision of such information by parents/guardians is voluntary and they should be so advised, while at the same time, they should be made aware that it may be required for the health and safety of the students, and that the information provided will be held in confidence. The teacher must then ensure that medical information is kept confidential.
- 11.5 The signed permission forms must be held in a secure location, by the school, for a minimum of two years. This is a requirement for liability insurance.
- 11.6 A sample of each excursion letter must be retained in the school office with the signed parental/guardian permission forms, for a minimum of two years.

**Note:** See also: Recreational Activities Involving Water Policy GSA.E. 20 Outdoor Activities: Curricular, Intramural and Interschool GSA E. 19