



HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC District School Board

Educational Field Trips/Excursions

Adopted:	September 28, 1998	Policy #:	P 2.2.3.
Revised:	May 23, 2023	Policy Category:	2.2. School Program

FORMER BELIEF STATEMENT:

~~The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board (the Board) believes that well-organized educational field trips and excursions add significant value to the educational program for students. All activities associated with these events shall be consistent with Catholic teaching and support the academic, cultural, and spiritual growth of students. The Board believes that all educational field trips and excursions shall reflect pertinent aspects of Catholic Social Teaching; in particular, attention to the preferential option for the poor in terms of access and participation.~~

REVISED BELIEF STATEMENT

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board (the Board) believes that well-organized educational field trips and excursions are essential components of an educational program that provides significant value to student learning. All activities associated with these events shall be consistent with Catholic teachings and purposefully support the academic, cultural, and spiritual growth of our students. Furthermore, the Board is committed to ensuring that all educational field trips and excursions reflect the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, specifically by prioritizing the preferential option for the poor to ensure equitable access and participation for all students.

FORMER POLICY STATEMENT:

~~It is the policy of the Board that all educational field trips and excursions contribute to a high quality Catholic education, adhere to safety precautions and provide significant value to students. Educational field trips are to be consistent with the Board's mission and vision. Educational field trips shall be extensions of the Ontario Curriculum, Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations and Catholic teaching.~~

~~It is the policy of the Board that educational field trips shall:~~

- ~~● Provide a proportional educational value in relation to the time spent traveling, the time spent on the activity, and the cost to each student;~~

- ~~Address the programs of those students who are not involved in the proposed activity to ensure that they will not be adversely affected;~~
- ~~Include adequate supervision under the direction of a teacher or employee of the Board and comply with educational health and safety standards;~~
- ~~Provide evidence of adequate preparation, monitoring and pre/post trip activities;~~
- ~~Be inclusive for all students as well as support principles of diversity and equity; and~~
- ~~Comply with other relevant policies of the Board.~~

REVISED POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Board that all educational field trips and excursions shall contribute to a high-quality Catholic education, adhere to rigorous safety and risk management standards, and provide clear educational value. Every excursion must align with the Board's mission and vision and serve as a valid extension of the Ontario Curriculum, Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, and Catholic teachings.

To fulfill this policy, educational field trips and excursions shall:

- Provide proportional educational value in relation to travel time, activity duration, and cost;
- Maintain instructional continuity for students not participating in the activity to ensure they are not adversely affected;
- Provide adequate supervision by a teacher or Board-designated employee and comply with all provincial health and safety standards;
- Demonstrate thorough preparation, including documented pre-trip and post-trip learning activities;
- Be inclusive of all students, actively supporting the principles of diversity, equity, and accessibility;
- Adhere to all other relevant Board policies and provincial regulations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Education shall ensure that administrative procedures are in place to support the implementation of this policy, including requirements related to risk management, staff training, emergency protocols, and student supervision. Administrative procedures shall include requirements for a comprehensive approval process that ensures all trips align with the Ontario Curriculum and Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. This policy and the corresponding administrative procedures shall align with applicable legislation, Ministry of Education direction, and the safety standards established by the Ontario School Board Insurance Exchange (OSBIE) and the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education (OPHEA).

Principals are responsible for ensuring that educational field trip and excursion procedures are implemented consistently within their schools. This includes verifying that all necessary

approvals are secured, safety protocols are established, and that all staff and volunteers are aware of their specific roles and responsibilities before, during, and after an excursion.

PROCEDURES: Moved and revised in an Administrative Procedure

1.—General

~~All educational field trips/excursions shall be organized by a teacher or a principal-designated employee. All educational field trips/excursions shall be a valid extension of the existing school program (e.g. the Ontario Curriculum and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations). All field trips/excursions shall follow risk management standards set out by OSBIE, OPHEA and other subject associations (where applicable).~~

2.—Field Trips and Excursions

Educational Field Trips	Educational Excursions
<p>Educational field trips shall be directly connected to the curriculum expectations of the subject or course. The maximum amount of instructional time permitted to be used per field trip is two days. Educational field trips shall include pre-trip and post-trip activities. A copy of these activities (including assessment/evaluation) shall be submitted to the principal with the application. For an educational field trip to be of substantial value all students in the related class or course should attend the event. The Board encourages travel within Canada for all educational field trips.</p>	<p>(e.g. Athletics, Campus Ministry, and Clubs) Educational excursions shall be a valid extension of the existing school co-curricular program. The maximum amount of instructional time permitted to be used per excursion is two days unless otherwise approved by the school's supervisory officer. The Board encourages travel within Canada for all educational excursions.</p>

Tourism-Based Excursions	Catholic Social Teaching Trips
<p>Tourism-Based Excursions shall be a valid extension of existing secondary school programs. No instructional time is permitted to be lost as result of an approved tourism-based excursion. Board staff shall not act as agents or advertise for trips at school or during the school day for trips that are not approved. The</p>	<p>Trips or excursions that exemplify the tenets of Catholic Social Teaching should be conducted in Canada (eg. mission trips, service learning etc). Whenever possible, the organization of the mission work should be coordinated with Catholic agencies. The maximum number of instructional days to be lost for a mission trip is two. Application may</p>

<p>Board encourages travel within Canada for all educational excursions:</p>	<p>be made to the Director of Education or designate to increase the maximum number of instructional days lost due to exceptional circumstances:</p>
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3.—Applications

The trip organizer shall submit the Application for Approval to Take Students on an Educational Field Trip/Excursion to the school principal for consideration of approval in advance of the trip (Appendix A). Each application shall be completed in full (including all necessary attachments), shall be subject to terms listed in the Educational Field Trip and Educational Excursion Approval Matrix (Appendix B) and all conditions of this policy/procedure. Schools or organizers are prohibited from raising funds, promoting trips or informing stakeholders about the trip before necessary approvals are in place. Any revisions subsequent to an approved field trip or excursion requires a re-application subject to the terms herein.

4.—Supervision

4.1.—General

The safety of students and staff on an educational field trip/excursion/excursion is of the utmost importance. A sufficient number of adult supervisors must be provided. Supervision guidelines for principals and teachers are available at the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) website and subject association websites as they relate to various activities:

Uniforms/Dress Code – The wearing of school uniforms and the strict enforcement of school-based codes of conduct (including dress codes) help to ensure that our schools are viewed in a favourable fashion by the broader community.

Code of Conduct – The same expectations for student behaviour apply to educational field trips/excursions as do a regular school day. The trip organizer and the principal shall ensure that a procedure is in place in the case a student needs to be sent home during an educational field trip/excursion. Supervisors are required to enforce safety procedures for activities as well as the Board's student code of conduct at all times.

4.2.—Supervision Compliment

The following supervision ratios are the minimum for educational field trip/excursions:

Kindergarten	1:5
Primary	1:8
Junior	1:10
Intermediate	1:15
Senior	1:20

~~**Principals shall give careful consideration to students with special needs when trips are planned. Additional supervisors may be warranted depending on the nature of the trip, the composition of the class and the distance/duration of the trip. Trip organizers shall consider the following factors when determining the number of supervisors for a trip/excursion:~~

~~*Ability of the Participants*—Degree of difficulty, physical strength, endurance, coordination, mobility, physical/mental limitations.~~

~~*Experience of the Participants*—First time experience versus various degrees of experience/skill in participating in the activity.~~

~~*Age of the Participants*—Factors such as physical size (height/weight), maturity level, risk perception, comprehension of rules/instructions, etc. are dependent on age.~~

~~*Environmental Factors*—Site lay-out (clear sight lines versus obstructions); dispersed groups (e.g. ski hills, amusement parks); tour groups versus self-guided, presence of dangerous features (e.g. cliffs, allurements, unusual weather or environmental phenomenon, etc.).~~

4.3. Overnight Trips/Excursions

~~For all overnight trips in which more than one gender are represented, corresponding representation of adult supervisors shall be present. At least one of those supervisors shall be a teacher or employee designated by the principal. Trip chaperones are responsible for the supervision of students for the entire duration of the educational field trip/excursion (including overnight). Consistent with supervision requirements for employees—all supervisors are not permitted to consume alcohol or recreational drugs on trips/excursions.~~

4.4. Emergency Contact Information

~~Two lists of all students and supervisors participating in an educational field trip/excursion shall be compiled prior to the event. One list shall be available in the school office and the other shall be in the possession of the trip organizer (supervisor). The list shall include appropriate student identification such as: the student name, address, phone number, emergency contact person (phone number) and their Health Card number. The trip organizer shall follow the Board's policies related to the administration of medication to students and the protection of anaphylactic pupils. When more than one bus is used, each person in charge~~

~~of a bus shall have an attendance list as well as a copy of the appropriate medical/ health and emergency information for all students.~~

4.5.—Emergencies

~~*Preparedness*—Plans should also be in place to provide supervision for students who may be injured or become ill (i.e. provide for someone to accompany to hospital, or return home), experience travel changes/delays (e.g. airline over-booking of flights, reassign flights, weather delays or connecting flights, etc.) or be detained by authorities (passport, immigration or other legal issues) Students should never be left unaccompanied in any of these situations. For all locations that are visited by students and staff—the trip supervisor shall review evacuation and emergency procedures.~~

~~*Reporting*—All injuries and/or accidents that occur on an educational field trip/excursion shall be reported to the school principal. In the event of a serious injury (an injury requiring medical treatment) or fatality, the incident shall be reported to the school superintendent by the school principal. The trip organizer shall follow the reporting requirements of OSBIE, the Ministry of Labour and the Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) in the case of an accident or injury.~~

4.6.—Activities Incidental to Primary Trip

~~Organizers often focus primarily on the destination risks and overlook the risks of other activities that may take place incidental to the primary purpose of the school excursion. Caution should be exercised when unscheduled or “ad hoc” activities are permitted. Typical examples of collateral hazards can occur when stops are made along the route of travel to visit venues including, but not limited to, amusement parks, restaurants, paintball parks, go kart tracks, wave pools, hotel swimming pools, etc. The same consideration must be given to whether such incidental activities are appropriate for the group, and as a school activity.~~

5.—Risk Management (other)

~~Whenever possible, supervisors should conduct a pre-trip visit to the site; learn about local conditions, and assess qualified leaders. Supervisors are encouraged to request proof of insurance from event/venue operators. Supervisors should never sign waivers for students. Supervisors should never agree to name commercial operators under the Board’s insurance.~~

6.—Informed Parent/Guardian Consent

~~No student shall participate in an educational field trip/excursion unless their parent/guardian has signed a permission/consent form (Appendix C). If the student is 18~~

~~years of age or older, the student shall be required to complete a release and indemnification form (Appendix D).~~

~~7.—Transportation~~

~~7.1.—Walking/Cycling—Field trip destinations that are within walking distance of the school will have various risk profiles to consider, depending on factors such as traffic density, crosswalks, sidewalks, rugged terrain, weather conditions, hilly terrain, student age, ability, special needs and distance being travelled. **Cycling**—Factors to be considered include age/experience of students, traffic conditions, helmet use, nature of terrain, weather conditions, etc. Since this mode of transportation is also a formalized physical education activity, it is recommended that the OPHEA Physical Education Ontario Safety Guidelines be referenced when planning this mode of transportation.~~

~~7.2.—School Bus~~

~~The safest means of transporting students is by school bus. School buses are engineered to provide the highest level of passenger protection. The design of a school bus includes more than 30 safety features that are not present in other passenger vehicles, including a safety compartment that surrounds a student with energy absorbing material to reduce injuries in collisions. Trip organizers are encouraged to use school buses to transport students. Trip organizers and students shall follow the Board policy on student transportation when using buses. Trip organizers shall consult with the approved vendor list when procuring bus services. The vendor list is maintained by the transportation consortium.~~

~~7.3.—Volunteer Drivers~~

~~Board-sanctioned volunteer drivers require approval by the school principal and may make application using Appendix E. Students are prohibited from being approved as Board-sanctioned volunteer drivers.~~

~~Students should be advised against travelling to and from educational field trips/excursions on their own or with other student passengers as this is the highest risk form of student transportation. According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada statistics, inexperienced drivers under age 25 may be involved in as many as 4 times more crashes than drivers over 25 years of age.~~

~~7.4.—Vehicle Rentals~~

~~Should a trip organizer choose to rent a vehicle to transport students and staff they shall rent the vehicle in the name of the school board and the optional~~

insurance coverage shall be purchased. Depending on the vehicle capacity, special driver licenses and specific aspects of the Highway Traffic Act will apply.

7.5. — Passenger Vans (9+ Passengers)

These types of vehicles, which come in various seating configurations (9, 12 and 15 passengers) have been associated with safety concerns in both the United States and in Canada. Under full-load conditions, the handling characteristics of these types of vehicles make them very unstable in emergency situations (skids, crash avoidance, braking, etc.) and they have a high roll-over crash history as the result of a high centre of gravity. Whenever possible, these vehicles should be avoided in favour of school buses or other more safe forms of transport.

7.6. — Rail

Commercial rail lines that are regulated by a federal authority are recommended for school excursions. Shuttle trains, monorails, etc., operated by a private operator associated with amusement parks, etc., may not be licensed or regulated and should be approached with caution — ask for documentation on licensing, maintenance, inspection and insurance.

7.7. — Aircraft

The use of non-commercial aircraft is prohibited. Commercial airlines are regulated by a federal authority and are the only form of aircraft transportation acceptable for school excursions.

7.8. — Watercraft

Commercial watercraft operated in Canada are subject to Transport Canada regulations, however, craft below 100 feet may not be required to meet certain safety standards for larger vessels, such as crew evacuation training, lifeboat capacity/drills, etc. and are not permitted for transportation of students.

8. — Students that Remain at School

The trip organizer and the school principal shall make adequate provision for appropriate school work and supervision for those students that remain at school while their classmates attend an educational field trip/excursion. No student shall be left behind unless expressly supported by the parent/guardian, a result of a disciplinary decision of the principal, because of suspension/expulsion from school or a failure to submit required documentation.

9. — Funding

Every reasonable attempt shall be made to ensure that no student is prevented from participating in any educational field trip/excursion through an inability to pay. Any fund-raising for educational field trips/excursions shall be consistent with Board policy.

10. Sunday Eucharist

Where an educational field trip/excursion includes a Sunday, the Application for Approval to Take Students on an educational field shall include provisions for all participants to attend Mass.

11. Cancellations

Any educational field trip/excursion may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of the Principal, Superintendent or the Director of Education. The Board and the school are not responsible for any financial losses assumed by students, parents/guardians or staff in the event of a cancellation.

12. Insurance Requirements

Category	Time Restrictions	Cancellation	Out of Province Medical	Student Accident	Auto (Appendix D Completed)
Day Educational Field Trip	During the instructional day.	Recommended where appropriate	N/A	Recommended	✓
Extended Day Educational Field Trip	Beyond the instructional day but not overnight.	Recommended where appropriate	N/A	Recommended	✓
Overnight Educational Field Trip	Up to three nights using up to two instructional days. Limited to one per class per school/year/semester.	Recommended where appropriate	✓	Recommended	✓
Overnight Educational Excursions	Up to three nights using up to two	Recommended where appropriate	✓	Recommended	✓

	instructional days:				
Extended Overnight Educational Field Trip	Four or more nights—using up to two instructional days:	Recommended where appropriate	✓	Recommended	✓
Educational Excursions		Recommended where appropriate	✓	Recommended	✓
Extended International Excursions	Extended International Excursions	✓	✓	Recommended	✓

13. Travel Industry Act Compliance

The Travel Industry Act provides limits on who may act as a travel agent. Trip organizers shall use Travel Industry Council of Ontario (TICO) certified travel agencies for all trips that are multi-day, require coach/rail/air/watercraft transportation and involve overnight accommodations:

14. Prohibited/Restricted Trips

Educational field trip/excursions that are considered to be a high risk will not be approved. A comprehensive list of high risk activities are listed on the Ontario School Board Insurance Exchange (OSBIE) website and several examples are listed below.

14.1. General

Educational field trips/excursions are prohibited in the following areas:

- Natural disaster areas—e.g. earthquake, floods, hurricane, tornado;
- War zones—imminent or existing;
- Regions with political or civil instability—e.g. civil war, terrorism; and
- Regions that pose a high risk for disease transmission

14.2. Restricted Activities

Activities noted below are prohibited with the following exceptions:

Activity	Qualifications/Restriction	Approval Process
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Alpine Skiing	Approved for secondary athletics	No application required for secondary athletics— all excursions shall follow all aspects of OSBIE ski package and OPHEA safety guidelines.
	Not approved for Primary/Junior Divisions	Not approved for Primary/Junior Divisions
	Intermediate/Senior Class Field Trips Require Approval	Requires principal and superintendent approval. All trips shall follow all aspects of the OSBIE ski package and OPHEA safety guidelines.
Ice Skating/ Ice Hockey	Hockey approved for secondary athletics— system-approved elementary hockey tournaments	No application required for secondary athletics— all excursions shall follow all aspects of OSBIE and OPHEA safety guidelines. Elementary tournament— Requires principal approval. All excursions shall follow all aspects of the OSBIE and OPHEA safety guidelines.
	Elementary and secondary skating	Requires principal approval and requirement to follow all OPHEA and OSBIE guidelines for the activity.
Swimming (Waterparks prohibited)	Approved for secondary athletics	No application required for secondary athletics— all excursions shall follow all aspects of OSBIE and OPHEA safety guidelines.
	May be approved for secondary phys-ed courses.	Requires principal approval. All trips shall follow all aspects of the OSBIE and OPHEA safety guidelines.
	May be approved for Grade 7 classes if part of swim to survive programs offered by certified lifeguards (Royal Life Saving Society of Canada)	Requires principal and superintendent approval. All trips shall follow all aspects of the OSBIE and OPHEA safety guidelines. Requires compliance with standards of safety set out by the Royal Life Saving Society of Canada.
Obstacle courses	May be approved for secondary phys-ed courses only.	Requires principal and superintendent approval. All trips shall follow all aspects of the OSBIE and OPHEA safety guidelines. Requires proof of insurance certificate by venue/provider and proof of qualifications for instructors. Requires emergency and safety plan.
Rock Climbing	May be approved for secondary phys-ed courses only.	Requires principal approval. All trips shall follow all aspects of the OSBIE and OPHEA safety guidelines. Requires proof of insurance certificate by venue/provider and proof of

		<p>qualifications for instructors. Requires emergency and safety plan.</p>
<p>Wilderness and/or Winter Camping</p>	<p>May be approved for secondary phys-ed courses/programs only.</p>	<p>Requires principal and superintendent approval. All trips shall follow all aspects of the OSBIE and OPHEA safety guidelines. Requires proof of insurance certificate by venue/provider and proof of qualifications for instructors. Requires emergency and safety plan including search and rescue plan and emergency evacuation plan.</p>
<p>Canoeing— kayaking and small watercraft</p>	<p>May be approved for secondary phys-ed courses only.</p>	<p>Requires principal and superintendent approval. All trips shall follow all aspects of the OSBIE and OPHEA safety guidelines. Requires proof of insurance certificate by venue/provider and proof of qualifications for instructors. Requires emergency and safety plan.</p>

14.3. Prohibited Activities

The following activities either exceed the threshold of risk the Board is prepared to accept and/or have little or no educational value (as they relate to the Ontario Curriculum) and are prohibited:

- Snow tubing
- Motorized small watercraft
- Waterparks
- Dunk tanks
- Inflatable fun structures
- Zip lining
- Firing ranges
- Axe throwing
- Paint ball
- White water rafting
- Cliff Rappelling
- Skydiving
- Other extreme sports

DEFINITIONS:

Educational Field Trip - Any event or programme which, for educational purposes (e.g class trips to the science centre), has students leaving school property.

Educational Excursions - An Educational Excursion is any event or programme which, for co-curricular purposes (e.g. athletics or clubs), has students leaving school property. Use of this

term will not include student exchanges, co-op education, credit/non-credit courses outside of school and outside the regular school day.

REFERENCES:

- Education Act c. E.2, s. 171 (1)
- Ontario School Board Insurance Exchange (OSBIE)
- Ontario Physical and Health Educators Association (OPHEA)
- Science Teachers' Association of Ontario (STAO)
- Ontario Council for Technology Education (OC

RESOURCES, APPENDICES AND FORMS:

- Administrative Procedure 2.2.16: Educational Field Trips/Excursions (in development)
- Appendix A - Student Educational Field Trips/Excursions Application
- Appendix B - Student Educational Field Trips/Excursions Approval Matrix
- Appendix C - Permission/Acknowledgement for Educational Field Trips and Athletic/Co-Curricular Participation
- Appendix D - Release and Indemnification Form for Educational Field Trips and Athletic/Co-Curricular Participation
- Appendix E - Application to Principal to be a Volunteer Driver