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**FIELD TRIP SAFETY**

APPROVED: 2005.02.22

REVISED: 2008.06.24

***POLICY***

The health, safety and security of students are paramount when participating in curricular or extra-curricular field trips.

***DEFINITIONS:***

**“High-risk activity”** is one that involves a real risk of serious injury to a student, even if all reasonable care is taken in such things as supervision, instruction, and provision of safety equipment.

**“Informed consent”** is a person’s agreement to allow something to happen that is based on full disclosure of facts needed to make the decision intelligently.

**“Curricular field trip”** involves teachers and students in a direct extension of the curriculum outside of the school setting. It stimulates students’ interest and inquiry and provides opportunities for intellectual, cultural and social development.

**“Extracurricular activity”** is a student and teacher endeavor that takes place outside the school setting, encompassing normally not more than two school days within a school year. An extracurricular activity emanates from the operations of a club or from an activity that takes place outside of regular instructional hours. It may have an indirect relationship to the curriculum and should provide experiences that enrich the student’s life rather than the content of a particular course. Students from several classes and age groupings may be involved. An extracurricular activity, therefore, provides for the development of interpersonal relationships skills as well as improvements in student-teacher relationships.

**“Risk”** = Likelihood x consequence. The continuum of risk ranges:

- Low likelihood, minimal consequence;
- High likelihood, minimal consequence;
- Low likelihood, severe consequence;
- High likelihood, severe consequence.

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Responsibility Centre: Assistant Superintendents



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***PREAMBLE***

The Board of Education wishes to offer educationally enriching field trips without exposing students to unacceptable risk.

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**REGULATIONS**

1. This policy should be used in conjunction with Policy 6145 Student Transportation and Travel and Policy 1240 Provision of Volunteer Services.
2. This policy applies to all persons involved in the planning, sponsorship or supervision of field trips.
3. This policy applies to day trips, overnight trips, in-district trips and out-of-district trips.
4. Schools should operate on the basis that:
  - 4.1 Parents have a right to give consent or refuse consent to their child's participation in all field trips, and in curricular activities and extracurricular activities that include significant physical risk beyond what would normally be involved in school attendance; and
  - 4.2 Parents need information relevant to those risks before they make the decision.
  - 4.3 These principles underlie the issue of informed consent.
5. The school district owes students a duty of care to protect them from the risk of reasonable foreseeable harm.
6. The standard of care is that of a careful and prudent parent. What that means depends upon all the circumstances, including:
  - 6.1 The nature of the activity;
  - 6.2 The number of students being supervised;
  - 6.3 The age, training and degree of skill of the students;
  - 6.4 The competency and capacity of the students involved; and
  - 6.5 The proclivity of young boys and girls to act recklessly in disregard, if not in actual defiance, of authority.
7. In considering field trips three questions that must be addressed are:
  - 7.1 Should we be engaging in this activity from both educational and safety perspectives?



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- 7.2 If we do, what are the risks?
- 7.3 How do we reduce those risks?
- 8. Risks need to be assessed and a plan made for each and every trip involving risky activities:
  - 8.1 Identify risks of injury;
  - 8.2 Identify strategies to manage and minimize risk;
  - 8.3 Implement risk reduction strategies;
  - 8.4 Monitor the results and implement changes.
- 9. Schools must ensure that all relevant information is provided to parents and that information is provided in a format that engages, motivates, and enables parents to assume parental responsibilities, so that they may make or withhold fully informed consent.
- 10. Schools 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. Past program decisions should not drive current program planning.
- 11. "Consent" is the permission of the parent for a child to participate in an activity while "waiver" is abandonment of the right to sue for harm caused by another's negligence. Waivers should not be used for School District No. 57 field trips unless required by a third party.
- 12. Where there is a question as to the risk level acceptability of a field trip, the principal must consult with and obtain approval in principle from an Assistant superintendent before proceeding with the trip's arrangements.
- 13. Field trips may not take place unless the field trip safety plan is approved in writing by the principal and, if applicable, by an Assistant superintendent. Appendix A is a sample form that schools may use for this purpose.

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### **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

1. Schools should refer to and be cognizant of the “YouthSafe Outdoors” guidelines, available at [www.youthsafeoutdoors.ca](http://www.youthsafeoutdoors.ca).
2. A consent form should be signed by the parent to indicate understanding of the risks and that the activity is appropriate for his/her child.
  - 2.1 The higher the risk, the greater the obligation to communicate the risks to the parents, including how those risks will be managed. Communicating with parents in writing may not be enough. Where there is a question as to what communication is appropriate, the principal shall consult with an Assistant superintendent.
  - 2.2 A consent form should include at least the following:
    - 2.2.1 A full description of the activities involved;
    - 2.2.2 The means of travel;
    - 2.2.3 A description of known risks; and
  - 3.2.1 The measures that will be taken to try to deal with the identified risks.

*Appendix B is a sample form that schools may use for this purpose.*
- 3.3 One consent form may be used to provide “blanket” consent for multiple low-risk, “routine” urban area field trips (examples: trips to a public library, municipal sports centre or museum or inter-school extra-curricular league play at various district schools). Where multiple trips are included on one form, all references in this policy referring to a singular field trip apply to the multiple trips. For all other cases, a separate consent form must be completed for each field trip.
4. Where a “blanket” consent is in effect, schools must ensure that they notify or remind parents of planned activities prior to each trip, on a trip-by-trip basis.
5. A student may not participate in a field trip unless a signed consent form is filed with the school. An exception to this may be made if a staff member receives verbal authorization from the parent by phone after the consent form information has been reviewed with the parent. In this case, the staff member signs the consent form, noting phone contact details.



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6. When, in the opinion of the principal or assistant superintendent, there are high risks involved in a field trip, a meeting must be held with parents to discuss the trip and obtain their input. When such a meeting is held, parents not in attendance must meet in person with a school staff member to discuss the trip prior to the school accepting written consent from them.
7. Examples of field trips that would not typically involve consultation with and approval from an assistant superintendent include:
  - 7.1 Commercial ski hill trips;
  - 7.2 Day hikes;
  - 7.3 Berg Lake Trail trips.
8. Examples of field trips that would typically involve consultation with and approval from an assistant superintendent include:
  - 8.1 Canoe trips;
  - 8.2 Rafting trips;
  - 8.3 Wilderness area trips.
9. Examples of field trips that may be combined on a multiple field trip consent form include:
  - 9.1 Low risk local area trips to:
    - 9.1.1 Public library
    - 9.1.2 Municipal sports centre
    - 9.1.3 Museum
    - 9.1.4 District schools for extra-curricular league play
  - 9.2 Multiple trips under this section should all be of a similar nature. For example, trips to a public library and trips to a museum may be “bundled together. Trips to an aquatic centre should not be combined on the same form as a trip to the public library. However, all urban-based activities connected with a course such as PE 12 may be “bundled”, provided the diversity of venues is clearly outlined on the original consent form.



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10. Field Trip Safety Plan

- 10.1 Prior to completing this plan, the sponsoring teacher(s) should become knowledgeable of the content of Policy 6153.2 (Field Trip Safety), Policy 6145 (Student Transportation and Travel) and Policy 1240 (Provision of Volunteer Services).
- 10.2 The sponsoring teacher(s) should complete this form and submit it to the principal for review and modification as required. The principal shall review the application, modify it if required, and if authorization is to be given, sign the form.
- 10.3 It is the principal's responsibility to ensure all aspects of Policy 6153.2 (Field Trip Safety) have been complied with before signing this form.
- 10.4 If the field trip travel involves a motor vehicle, a completed "Curricular and Extra-curricular Student Transportation and Travel" application form must be attached. This form is available in the appendix of Policy 6145 (Student Transportation and Travel).

11. Retention of Forms

- 11.1 Copies of the signed forms (Field Trip Safety Plan and Field Trip Consent) should be held by the sponsor(s) for the duration of the trip and should be retained in the school's files for one year.

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Approved: 2005.02.22  
Revised: 2008.06.24



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**FIELD TRIP SAFETY PLAN**

Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Chaperones / Volunteer Adults: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Return Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

- Check one:  This safety plan is for a single field trip  
 This safety plan is for multiple low-risk local area field trips.

Description of activities/trips: <i>[Expand box to accommodate text]</i>
Description of known risks, beyond those associated with typical day trips in urban areas: <i>[Expand box to accommodate text]</i>
Description of planned strategies to reduce those risks: <i>[Expand box to accommodate text]</i>

Check all that apply:

- A meeting will be held with all parents.
- A copy of Policy 6145 Appendix 1 "Student Travel Safety Form" is attached.
- This field trip requires authorization from an Assistant Superintendent.  
*[Allow one week for processing time.]*

**A copy of this form must be attached to parent/guardian Field Trip Consent Form**



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Certification:

I (we) am aware of the requirements of Policy 6153.2 (Field Trip Safety) and its regulations and hereby certify that this trip will be conducted accordingly.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Sponsor name*                      *Signature*                      *Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Sponsor name*                      *Signature*                      *Date*

Authorization to Proceed with Field Trip:

Principal                      \_\_\_\_\_                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Assistant  
Superintendent  
(if required)                      \_\_\_\_\_                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Revised 2008.06.24; 2021.08.23*



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**FIELD TRIP CONSENT FORM**

1. School District No. 57 (Prince George) requires all schools to have a signed field trip consent form on file prior to permitting a student to participate in a field trip.
2. Policy 6153.2 (Field Trip Safety) may be viewed on the district's website [www.sd57.bc.ca](http://www.sd57.bc.ca).
3. Where consent for multiple field trips is given, the consent may be withdrawn at any time upon verbal or written notification to the school.
4. Please sign either Part A or Part B of this form, return it to the school and retain your copy of the Field Trip Safety Plan.

Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Return Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

- Check one:     This is a single field trip consent form.  
                    This is a multiple low-risk local area field trip.

**Part A**

My signature below indicates that I:

- have read the field trip information above and attached to this form;
- have considered and accept the risks associated with this field trip;
- consent to the student listed below participating in the field trip;
- understand that the school and district codes of conduct for students apply at all times on the field trip;
- accept monetary loss, if any, should the school find it necessary to cancel or cut short the field trip.

Student's name *[please print]*: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / guardian's name *[please print]*: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Medic alert or other information to be shared with trip supervisor and chaperones:
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**Part B**

I do not wish *[student's name]* \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in this field trip.

Parent / guardian's name *[please print]*: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Revised 2008.06.24; 2021.08.23*

