



In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the following are Administrative Operational Procedures for Educational Field Trips.

PREAMBLE

The Board recognizes the educational value for students and staff to participate in educationally based field trip experiences. The Board encourages educational field trips as part of an enriching Catholic educational program for all students, and supports the participation of students and staff in educational activities and programs off school premises.

All Niagara Catholic educational field trips must have a direct and enhancing relationship with the curriculum of the classroom. This includes local, regional and provincial field trips, as well as those of an extended nature to other parts of Canada and to other parts of the world.

The Niagara Catholic District School Board will make every effort to ensure that all students have every opportunity to access all field trips. The dignity of every student and parent/guardian will be honoured in the collection of fees. The Board recognizes that most educational field trips bear a cost for participation. If there is a direct cost to the student, participation is strictly voluntary and arrangements will be made for the education of those students not participating.

It is expected that all educational field trips involve preparatory, follow-up and assessment activities. When an Education Field/Excursion Trip occurs on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation, the Principal is to ensure that an appropriate liturgy, including Eucharist, is conducted for all students, staff and supervisors.

Individuals who are employed by the Niagara Catholic District School Board and appointed by the Principal as a chaperone to meet the supervision requirements of the Board can participate and accompany students on Board approved educational field trips.

Individuals, who are not employed by the Niagara Catholic District School Board, and are requested by the Principal to serve as a chaperone/volunteer to meet the supervision requirements of the Board, will require prior to being appointed as a chaperone/volunteer, an acceptable Vulnerable Sector Background Check from the Niagara Regional Police Services or another police service, approval from the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education and the school Principal.

Only registered students, appointed employees and approved chaperones/volunteers of the Niagara Catholic District School Board can participate in educational field trips.

PART I - DEFINITIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

A. EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS

Educational Field Trip is an all-encompassing phrase which may include neighbourhood studies; visits to buildings and sites of historical interest; visits to museums, galleries, factories, zoos and farms, sport

events, theaters, Parish Church; overnight visits to field centres and campgrounds; and travel in Canada and abroad.

All Educational Field Trips must be supervised by an employee of the Board, unless otherwise approved by the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education and the Principal.

Educational Field Trips are:

- Any school supervised activity beyond the school property.
- Trips that directly enhance specific curriculum expectations designed to improve student knowledge.
- Based on Social Justice objectives that are classified as educational field trips since social justice expectations are provided in all subject based curricula within Niagara Catholic.
- Linked to specific subject curriculum expectations designed for students to achieve a credit or credits as part of their trip outside the Province of Ontario are classified as educational field trips and designated as extended overnight field trips.
- For registered students, appointed employees and approved chaperones/volunteers of the Niagara Catholic District School Board.

B. EXPECTATIONS

The following are required expectations of all educational field trips:

- Enhances the spiritual, esthetic, cultural, intellectual, athletic or social experiences of students.
- Made available to every student at every grade level; exceptions respecting individual students may be made at the discretion of the school Principal.
- Extension of the classroom and school with all expectations enforced.
- Begin the moment the students leave the school property.
- Regular school attendance with appropriate programming is expected for those students not participating in the Educational Field Trips.

C. EDUCATIONAL GOALS

The following broad objectives should be considered by a teacher planning Educational Field Trips:

- Trips that directly enhance specific curriculum expectations designed to improve student knowledge.
- Experiential learning for students and staff at a particular event or location.
- Where reasonable and practical, educational field trips shall be in the Niagara Region and surrounding area where appropriate program experiences can be realized.
- The experience should have educational value in proportion to the time spent traveling, the time spent on the activity, and the cost to each student.

PART II - CATEGORIES

Educational Field Trips within Niagara Catholic are defined as:

- Day Field Trips
- Extended Day Field Trips
- Overnight Field Trips
- Extended Overnight Field Trips
- Continuing Education Credit Programs
- Exchanges or
- Excursions

To determine the type of educational field trip and approvals required, the following criteria are provided.

1. *Day Field Trips (Day)*

A field trip which occurs within the hours of classes of a school.

2. *Extended Day Field Trips (Day trips)*

A field trip which extends beyond regular school hours, but does not include an overnight stay. A field trip in which students are driven to and/or picked up by parents/guardians at the school.

3. *Overnight Field Trip (One to three nights)*

A field trip that normally requires students to be lodged for one, two or three nights.

Overnight Field Trips of more than one night's duration shall be limited to one per class per school year, and shall be restricted to students of Grade 6 and up (Grades 5/6 combination excepted).

4. *Extended Overnight Field Trip (Four or more nights or flight ticket of \$600.00 or more)*

Any school/board sponsored and supervised activity, on scheduled instructional days, beyond the school property that requires four or more nights' lodgings, or requiring an individual flight ticket of \$600.00 or more.

(An Extended Overnight Field Trip which involves more than one school will follow the same procedures and will require the approval of the Principal of all affected schools at the time of submission to the Committee). (See Section C)

5. *Continuing Education Credit Programs*

Credit courses organized during the school year or during the summer require approval from the Principal of Continuing Education, the Superintendent of Education responsible for Continuing Education and the Director of Education.

6. *Exchanges*

School-to-School exchanges are available for all elementary and secondary students in Niagara Catholic. Applications must be made by the school Principal to the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education and include detailed plans and financial expenditures regarding the educational, cultural and linguistic aspects of a school-to-school exchange. Principals are to ensure that there is a formalized reciprocal agreement between participating schools. School-to-school exchanges can take place at any time during the calendar year. School-to-School exchanges require the approval of the Principal, Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education, Extended Overnight Field Trip, Exchange and Excursion Committee and the Director of Education prior to any authorization to participate.

Student Exchanges may be planned for elementary or secondary school students by parents/guardians. Prior to any commitment, parents/guardians are to discuss the student exchange request with the Principal for approval. In considering the request, Principals are to ensure that there is a formalized reciprocal agreement with the student exchange company for an exchange to take place in a mutually agreed upon school year prior to submission to the Extended Overnight Field Trip, Exchange and Excursion Approval Committee.

7. *Excursion*

An excursion is a trip that enhances specific subject curriculum expectations to enrich a student's overall Catholic education.

An excursion is a trip that is planned and arranged for secondary school students that would be held during the year when the students are not normally expected to be attending classes and that may not adhere to all guidelines and procedures relating to Educational Field Trips. Approval will not normally be granted for excursions that require the students and/or staff to be away from school on a regularly scheduled instructional school day.

8. *Extended Overnight Field Trip, Exchange and Excursion Approval Committee*

The Committee is composed of:

- 1 Superintendent of Education
- 1 Elementary School Principal
- 1 Secondary School Principal
- 1 Secondary School Vice-Principal
- 1 Program Department Consultant

PART III - FINANCING EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS

1. If there is a direct cost to the student(s), participation is voluntary and arrangements must be made for the education of the student(s) not participating.
2. All costs associated with trip must be considered, itemized and included in the original application prior to any application being considered by the Principal.
3. Principals should take steps to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to participate in a planned trip (excluding excursions). This may include partial or complete financial subsidy for some students.
4. Principals are to ensure that the actual cost to the student is kept at a reasonable level.
5. It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that the fairest prices for transportation, accommodation and all other expenditures are obtained and that all transactions are carried out according to procedures and guidelines of the Board.
6. For all overnight field trips and excursions, Principals must submit three (3) written proposals from travel companies along with a Principal recommendation of the best value for students. The proposals and Principal recommendation are to be attached to either the Request for Overnight Field Trip or Request for Extended Overnight Field Trip form.
7. Central Funding for Out-of-Classroom Activities

The Board may allocate funds as determined by the annual budgeting process, which may be available to the Principals for the purpose of providing out-of-classroom activities.

PART IV - APPROVALS

Applicable Forms

- [*Airline / Tour Company / Insurance Checklist*](#)
- [*OFSAA Transportation Form*](#)
- [*Request for Co-instructional Participation Form*](#)
- [*Request for Continuing Education Credit Program Overnight Field Trip, Extended Overnight Field Trip Exchange and Excursion Form*](#)
- [*Request for Educational Day and Extended Day Field Trip Form*](#)
- [*Request for Overnight Field Trip, Extended Overnight Field Trip and Excursion Form*](#)

- [*Request to Transport Student Consent Form*](#)
- [*Volunteer Drivers - Authorization to Transport Students*](#)

Parents/guardians whose children may be involved in an approved Overnight Field Trip, Exchange or Excursion shall be invited to a meeting where the trip proposal will be explained in detail and their support of the proposed trip solicited. A written consent form will be completed and signed by a parent/guardian granting approval for the child to participate in the proposed trip.

1. Principals may approve:
 - trips within walking distance of a school;
 - half-day or full day trips;
 - extended school day trips, but not continuing overnight.
 - All Overnight Field Trips (one to three nights lodging), including athletic and academic tournaments and competitions.
 - Information regarding Overnight Field Trips shall be sent to the respective Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education **at least four weeks prior** to arrangements for the trip being completed. ([*Request for Overnight Field Trip, Extended Overnight Field Trip and Excursion Form*](#))
2. To ensure extended overnight field trips and excursions meet the full intent of the Educational Field Trip Policy, only Extended Overnight Field Trip and Excursion Committee approved trips and/or excursions are to be proposed to students and parents/guardians for participation. No extended overnight field trips and/or excursions are to be presented to students or parents/guardians without the signed approval of the Superintendent of Education who is the Chair of the Extended Overnight Field Trip, Exchange and Excursion Approval Committee.
3. Approvals of the Principal, Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education, Extended Overnight Field Trip, Exchange and Excursion Approval Committee and Senior Administrative Council are required for:
 - all Extended Overnight Field Trips;
 - all Excursions;
 - any other trip not covered by these Procedures.

Requests for approval of Extended Overnight Field Trips, Exchanges and Excursions shall be submitted by the Principal to the respective Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education for consideration. If approved, the requests are forwarded to the Extended Overnight Field Trip and Excursion Approval Committee at least six (6) months prior to the planned activity. Exceptions to the timelines can be made at the discretion of the respective Family of Schools' Superintendent in consultation with Senior Administrative Council.

Submissions to the Extended Overnight Field Trip, Exchange and Excursion Approval Committee must be made prior to the first Fridays in June, October and February.

All requests shall include:

- [*Request for Overnight Field Trip, Extended Overnight Field Trip and Excursion Form*](#)
- [*Airline / Tour Company / Insurance Checklist*](#)
- A copy of proposed itinerary.
- Additional written information that will assist the committee in its consideration of the request.

4. Any Field Trip/Excursion may be cancelled at any time by a Principal and/or Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education, if required.

5. Prior to approving all travel requests by staff, Principals are to clearly understand the answers to the questions on the Airline/Tour Company/Insurance Checklist as they apply to individual trip applications.

All Principals are to:

- record the answers and file responses at the school;
 - submit the responses with the checklist to the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education if the trip is required to have Superintendent of Education approval;
 - instruct the tour supplier to forward a letter outlining their understanding of the Terms and Conditions prior to any finalization/approval of the trip. (fax copy of [Airline / Tour Company / Insurance Checklist](#) to agent if required)
 - When applicable, determine the exact date and time period each policy is in effect and the length of time it remains in effect. (i.e. cancellation of trip without penalty must be made by - date and time; cancellation with fifty-percent refund must be made by - date and time; cancellation done in writing individually or by the entire group signing a letter etc.)
6. All approved trips by the Extended Overnight Field Trip, Exchange and Excursion Committee will be reported to the Senior Administrative Council for consideration. Only educational field trips approved by Senior Administrative Council will be reported to the Board of Trustees for information. Following notification of the Board, Principals will be informed that submitted trips have been approved by Senior Administrative Council and the Board has been informed of the trip and can proceed in notifying staff of the approval.
 7. If not approved, the Committee will forward to the Principal of the school requesting permission for the trip, a summary of the rationale.
 8. Where approval has not been granted, the Principal may re-submit a proposal to the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education with the required revisions.
 9. An unapproved trip is one, which has not followed the process outlined to receive official approval or is one, which has followed process, but has been denied. Neither the school nor the Board will sponsor, promote or participate in the planning of any unapproved trip.
 10. Teachers are deemed in law to be in a position of authority over students by virtue of their positions as teachers. Therefore, teachers shall not become involved in any unapproved field trips with students. As well as facing disciplinary procedures, teachers involved in non-approved field trips surrender their legal claim to the Board's liability insurance coverage and to Worker's Compensation protections.
 11. Only individuals approved to chaperone or supervise a field trip are eligible to participate in any aspect of the educational field trip. For clarity, individuals who are not approved as chaperones, supervisors or volunteers cannot be included in travel arrangements, travel with or accompany the students and staff on the field trip.
 12. Students or staff who request to leave the group on an approved field trip, such as to meet a family member, must submit a request, in writing, to the Principal prior to the departure of the field trip. The Principal will determine if arrangements can be made to assist with the request providing it does not interfere with the travel arrangements of the group. If approval is granted by the Principal, it is permitted with the condition that:
 - the Board is not responsible for the safety of the student or staff member when away from the group; and,
 - a staff member, chaperone or supervisor must meet with a designated family member prior to a student's departure and upon return to the group
 - the student or staff member must report to the chaperone/supervisor upon their return; and,

- any delay in meeting with the group at the designated time and location is not the responsibility of the Board and will not adversely affect the travel arrangements of the group; and,
- students or staff who miss returning to the group will incur any costs for the delay or will be solely responsible for alternate transportation arrangements to either meet the group at a designated location or to return home.

PART V - PARENT/GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION

When planning a school educational field trip, excursions or exchanges, the Principal, or designate, shall contact the Special Education Department for input regarding any special accommodations required pertaining to any exceptional student or students with special needs participating in the field trip.

1. Trips within walking distance or trips as part of curriculum expectations:
 - A signed parental application form is recommended but not required for a day trip beyond school property where the students will be traveling on foot or is part of non-optional program or Board expectations of students. (i.e. day retreats, Church liturgies, graduation practices, graduation celebrations)
 - Teachers are required to obtain Principal approval and indicate to the Principal the destination and approximate return time.

Although specific notification and application are not necessary for such trips, it is essential that parents be made aware of the fact that such trips may take place throughout the school year as part of the total school curriculum or Board expectations. It is mandatory that such awareness be created by means of information letters and/or newsletters throughout the school year.

2. Letter to Parents/Guardians

For all other school trips, written permission/consent from the parent /guardian will be obtained. The supervising teacher shall, prior to obtaining consent of parents or guardians, inform parents or guardians of trip details. (The signed documentation of all trips shall be retained for the current school year until the successful completion of that trip).

These details shall include program rationale; dates; departure, return time and pick up arrangements; cost; method of transportation; and, destination;

This letter will be signed by both the supervising teacher and the Principal.

Parent/guardian requests should be phrased as follows:

I, (parent's/guardian's name) consent that (student's name) participate in the trip to (destination). If a non-refundable deposit/payment is required from the parent, the form signed by the parent shall include this statement. "A non-refundable deposit/payment of \$ AMOUNT is required for this trip."

The parent/guardian acknowledges that neither the Board nor any employee bears liability for the deposit/payment once paid if the child is unable to attend.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date of Signature

3. Emergency Planning

- An itinerary of each trip must be available in the school office in order that the Principal may contact the supervising teacher in charge of the group if an emergency arises.
- Provision shall be made by the Principal/teacher that someone at the school site be available to be contacted should an emergency arise at any time during the trip or if a return is delayed. Parents are to be contacted as soon as possible.

- The supervising teacher/teacher designate has the right to change the itinerary of the trip if, at their discretion, an emergency or dangerous situation arises, or as the situation warrants. Any change to the itinerary must be communicated to the Principal, and as determined by the Principal based on the nature of the change of itinerary, communicated with parents/guardians of students on the field trip.
- If students are billeted in homes, then the host family must have information which will allow them to contact the teacher in charge at any time.

4. List of Participants

When a group of students leaves the school on an approved trip, a list of all students and staff in the group in each vehicle must be prepared, one copy of which will be left in the school office, and another copy to accompany the group.

PART VI - SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

1. The supervising teacher shall obtain relevant medical information about each student and also authorization to procure medical attention in the event of an emergency.
2. Parent/Guardians should be made aware that this medical information 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.
3. Before any out-of-school program, the teacher must instruct the students in appropriate behaviour and safety procedures as well as any inherent dangers of the activity. The teacher(s) must show that the students have been carefully prepared and that the activity is appropriate to the age and physical/motor maturity of the participants.
4. For pupils who require medication, the routine parental consent form is to be completed and an adequate supply of medicine is to be secured.
5. Where there is instruction in High Care (e.g. water activities, skiing, etc.) activities, the instructor(s) must be certified personnel, and additional supervision must be provided by appropriate teaching personnel.
6. Water Safety

Water safety requires close and direct supervision at all times. Teachers must inform parents when the trip will include planned water activities.

7. Swimming and Water Activities including Rowing

Notwithstanding Year End Field Trips, recreation swimming is prohibited unless it is an integral part of the program. With the exception of Board sanctioned co-instructional rowing programs, and regattas, when students are in public or private pools, or natural bodies of water, the Principal shall designate, as adults in charge of the water safety, only individuals who have a valid and current lifeguarding certificate: Red Cross Safety: Bronze Cross - minimum qualifications.

*Ratios: 1:10 natural bodies of water
1:20 private pool*

In Public Pools, the appropriate Public Health By-Laws will prevail.

8. Year End Field Trips

Field trips that include water parks, public beaches, private pools, etc. are at the discretion of the Principal providing all safety and supervision procedures are adhered to as described in the O.P.H.E.A. Safety Services Package at <http://safety.ophea.net/>.

9. Non-Commercial/Recreational and Co-Instructional Boating

- Boating trips are generally to be organized only for secondary school students. Principals must obtain the prior approval of the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education to plan a non-commercial/recreational boating trip. (See O.P.H.E.A. Safety Guidelines.)

Ratios: 1:8 on a trip

1:10 water activities in a confined area with a clear overall view and reasonable distance to craft

- With the exception of Board sanctioned co-instructional rowing programs, and regattas, all students must wear a properly fastened M.O.T. approved life jacket or personal flotation device when in a boat or canoe.
- Instruction in boating, sailing and canoeing must be supervised by suitably qualified teachers or adults.
- It is the responsibility of the trip supervisor to ascertain that instructors in these activities are qualified according to current regulations.
- All students and adult supervisors must acquire at least minimum competency levels as determined by the qualified instructors before participating in a boating excursion.
- Prior to any boating, canoeing or rowing program, the swimming ability of each student must be ascertained. To be considered a swimmer the student must demonstrate to qualified personnel, (the skills outlined in the O.P.H.E.A. Safety Services Package) that they are able to:
 - Swim 100 meters;
 - Tread water for 5 minutes;
 - H.E.L.P. (Heat Escape Lessening Position) and huddle with P.F.D. (Personal Flotation Device) on for 5 minutes
- Field trips involving commercial ship, ferry or other boat cruises are not prohibited by this policy.

See O.P.H.E.A. Safety Services Package

10. Downhill Skiing/Snowboarding Trips or Co-Instructional Activities

Downhill Skiing/Snowboarding Trips are permitted only for Grade 4 to Grade 12 students. Principals are to ensure that adequate supervision is in place and that qualified instructors are available to provide the necessary training and instruction (See O.P.H.E.A. Safety Guidelines).

All students participating in a school sponsored ski/snowboarding trip will be required to provide and wear a Canadian Standards Association (CSA) properly fitted, snow sport certified ski helmet indicating the helmet is approved as a ski helmet specifically designed for skiing or snowboarding. (i.e. ASTM, CE, SNELL)

It is recommended that all staff and chaperones participating in a school-sponsored ski/snowboarding trip provide and wear a Canadian Standards Association (CSA) ski helmet indicating the helmet is approved as a ski helmet specifically designed for skiing or snowboarding.

For these activities, all equipment must be provided or rented by the participant.

Principals will ensure that prior to boarding a bus to depart on a ski trip or co-instructional activity, all students prove to the staff supervisor that (a) they are in possession of an approved ski helmet for their individual use or (b) show written proof that they have reserved an approved ski helmet at the ski resort.

Staff supervisors will record on a trip/activity list of participating students that the student is in possession of an approved ski helmet to wear at all times while skiing/snowboarding.

Students who are not in compliance with this requirement will be prohibited from participating in optional ski trips/co-instructional activities.

Parent/guardian approval letters for participation in ski/snowboarding trips or co-instructional activities will include the following acknowledgements signed by parents/guardians;

- that students will be skiing/boarding on their own, parents/guardians are to impress upon their child to follow all safety rules including wearing a properly certified and fitted ski/boarding helmet at all times while skiing/boarding
- that parents/guardians will provide their child with all certified safety equipment for the activity
- that skiing/boarding is a high-risk sport and students are accountable for their own safety
- that student consequences are in place for non-compliance which could include a revoking of a ski/boarding pass for the remainder of the season that the school nor the Board is responsible for any accident.

11. Procedures in Cases of Student Injury or Illness

- In the event of serious injury or illness to the student, the person nearest to the incident shall begin appropriate emergency action: ensure breathing, the stoppage of blood flow, ensure the injured student's comfort. This will include immediately notifying a person qualified in first aid. If the in-charge person is not present, this person shall be notified immediately and proper procedures initiated.
- The in-charge person shall establish and follow an emergency action plan.
- If the class is to be away from school for an extended period of time (overnight), the person in charge shall collect in advance the Health Card number for each student and a blanket approval for permission to seek medical attention is required.
- All teachers are encouraged to undergo training in first aid and C.P.R.

12. Additional Coverage

All Niagara Catholic District School Board students are encouraged to purchase the Accident Insurance Policy offered by the school board each September.

13. Health Insurance Out of Province

Because of the high cost of health services in other countries, parents must submit proof of an out-of-province health insurance policy which will cover children on a school tour out of the province.

14. If, as a result of discipline/safety concerns, a student is required to be sent home by the supervising teacher during an educational field trip, the school and or Board is not responsible for any cost incurred in transporting a student home. These students may be required to discontinue their journey and such persons shall not be entitled to a refund.

It is the responsibility of the student(s), parent(s) or guardian(s) to provide, or arrange for supervision of a student who is sent home by the supervisor in charge. All costs to provide for such supervision is incurred by the parent/guardian.

PART VII – SUPERVISION

1. Out-of-classroom programs are to be under the supervision of at least one teacher or, in unique situations, any Board employee or designate approved by the Principal. Where more than one person participates in out-of-classroom activities, the Principal shall designate one as the “in-charge” person. Principals shall ensure that all precautions for the safety, comfort and supervision of participating students are taken.

2. For most trips outside Canada or the continental United States, a minimum of ten (10) participating students are required for an overseas trip to be approved. Exceptions may be approved for participation in international co-instructional activities or events.
3. All trips outside Canada or the continental United States require a minimum of two (2) supervisors/chaperones recommended by the Principal, and approved by the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education.
4. The following minimum adult-to-student ratios are required. As soon as the number of students increases by one over the ratio, another supervisor **must** be added.

School Trips:

	<i>JK-K</i>	<i>Grade 1 to 6</i>	<i>Grade 7 & 8</i>	<i>Grade 9 to 12</i>
Walking Tours – One Day Trips	1:10	1:10	1:15	1:20
One Day Trips	1:10	1:10	1:15	1:20
Overnight Trips	N/A	N/A	1:10	1:15
Overnight Trips Outside Canada or the continental United States	N/A	N/A	1:10	1: 14+1 additional supervisor

- The ratios for Walking Tours and One Day Trips may be modified at the discretion of the Principal to accommodate such events as sacramental preparation, liturgies, or the spontaneity of the teachable moment.
 - To accommodate the possibility of medical emergencies, at least two adults should accompany students for all overnight trips or arrangements made for students to join other school communities.
5. Principals shall ensure that a sufficient number of supervisors/chaperones accompany the students in order that the visit or field trip will be a safe and valid educational experience. Some circumstances will require additional instructional staff than others in order that the students obtain the maximum benefit from their excursion.
 6. Employees of the Niagara Catholic District School Board can participate and accompany students on approved education field trips, as appointed by the Principal, to act as a chaperone to meet supervision requirements.
 7. Individuals who are not employed by the Niagara Catholic District School Board and are requested by the Principal to serve as a chaperone/volunteer to meet the supervision requirements will require to produce, prior to being appointed as a chaperone/volunteer, a negative Criminal Background Check from the Niagara Regional Police Services, approval from the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education and the school Principal.
 8. At a minimum, Vulnerable Sector checks will be required of all volunteers participating in overnight field trips which are approved by the school Principal and/or Senior Administrative Council.
 9. Principals are required to make approved chaperones/volunteers aware of their insurance coverage under this policy. Names of all staff and chaperone/volunteer supervisors must be recorded in order to protect them from liability for which the Board carries a liability policy to a limit of \$20,000,000.00.
 10. In determining supervision requirements, Principals shall ensure that;
 - the number of supervisors/chaperones comply with the adult-to-student ratios as indicated in Point Four (#4)

- all staff beyond those organizing the overnight field trip or excursion are notified of the opportunity to supervise or chaperone the trip.
 - supervisors/chaperones maybe parent volunteers approved by the Principal to act as official school chaperones.
 - the selection of additional supervisors/chaperones will be recommended by the Principal after consultation with the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education.
11. If a program includes students of both genders, and extends overnight, then supervisors/ chaperones of both genders must accompany the trip. Under exceptional circumstances, the Family of School's Superintendent of Education may waive this provision, and parents/guardians will be notified of this documented exception, and a notation will be made on file.
 12. Supervisors/chaperones that comply with this Board Administrative Operational Procedures participate free of charge. The costs associated with compliance will be recovered either through a combination of complimentary tickets and/or a surcharge to students.
 13. Notwithstanding Point Eleven (#11), supervisors/chaperones approved by the Principal, after consultation with the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education, may elect to participate in a trip by making a financial contribution to the cost of the trip equal to the amount paid by individual students. For example, trips that focus on Social Justice experiential learning.
 14. All complimentary tickets provided by a travel company will be used to reduce the cost of travel of the number of supervisors/chaperones as required by these Administrative Procedures. Additional complimentary travel tickets provided will be used to defray the cost of the students participating in the program.
 15. Notwithstanding Point Thirteen (#13), additional supervisors/chaperones may receive financial assistance up to 25% of the cost of the trip.

The amount of financial assistance provided to additional supervisors is calculated by a combination of additional complimentary tickets and student surcharge.

For example:

36 participating students generates 6 complimentary tickets.

Based on these procedures, 36 students require three (3) supervisors who travel free.

Therefore there are three (3) complimentary tickets remaining.

The Principal would inform staff that three (3) complimentary travel spaces are available with financial assistance up to 25% of the cost of the trip. The difference of the three (3) complimentary tickets would be used to defray the cost paid by students participating in the program.

16. For trips that do not involve complimentary tickets based on the number of students traveling, all approved chaperones/supervisors above the Board supervision ratio of 14.1 or 15.1, excluding the first two staff members supervising overseas trips, will be required to pay the same travel cost as each student.

PART VIII - TRANSPORTATION

1. General Considerations
 - While the Board does not recommend using private passenger vehicles to transport students to a school related activity, all staff members (administrators/teachers/support staff) or volunteer drivers must complete the [*Volunteer Drivers - Authorization to Transport Students Form*](#) and have authorization from the school Principal.

- In the event that privately owned automobiles are used in the transportation of students, only fully- graduated licensed drivers authorized by the Principal shall be permitted to transport the pupils.
- A passenger list containing the name of the driver and the names of each student in the vehicle must be made, with one copy provided to the driver of the vehicle, and one copy retained at the school. Only the students on the passenger list are permitted in the designated vehicle.
- All parents/guardians of the students transported by volunteer drivers must be informed of the transportation arrangements and liability by providing a signed letter consenting to their child being transported by the approved volunteer driver. (Reference: [Request to Transport Student Consent Form](#))
- When a school activity is completed, Principals will ensure that prior to the event, a student provides written permission from their parent/guardian to allow them to:
 - return to the school with the volunteer driver;
 - receive a ride home from another parent as identified on the permission letter; or
 - receive a ride home from an identified parent/guardian.
- The Board cannot by law provide the automobile insurance for individuals and vehicles not owned by the Board. Principals are to ensure that persons using their own vehicles to transport students for extracurricular activities have a minimum auto insurance limit of \$1 million in the event of an accident. A vehicle shall not be used to transport in excess of six passengers unless licensed under the Highway Traffic Act as a bus and the driver is licensed appropriately.
- Persons transporting students in private motor vehicles should be sure that their Automobile Public Liability Insurance coverage is valid and current and meets the Board's requirements. The Board, however, maintains an Excess Liability Insurance Policy, which covers all employees and volunteers who are transporting students within Canada and Continental United States on behalf of the Board to a combined limit of \$20,000,000.00. This Administrative Operational Procedures comes into effect if a judgment arises against that employee or volunteer resulting from use of his vehicle and is in excess of the limit carried by the individual on their personal policy.
- It is expected that all parents/guardians of students being transported in Private Motor Vehicles have O.P.C.F. 44 Coverage with their own Insurance Policy.
- When a school group is staying in a remote area, teachers are advised to have a vehicle available for emergency transport of students, in the event of medical emergency, to the nearest appropriate Medical Facility.
- Where staff or parent volunteers provide transportation, a seat belt must be provided for each student and no reimbursement shall be provided.

2. Rental Vehicles

- Vehicles may be rented for student transportation to school board events.
- Vehicle rental is limited to 30 days or less. Rented vehicle use is for approved school board business only.
- Employees who rent vehicles in Ontario under their own name may be exposing their own insurance policies to a claim for any damage or injury which occurs while the vehicle is in their custody or control. The school board has purchased the OPCF 27 endorsement, in the event of a third party liability loss, the fleet policy is the primary coverage, therefore removing the exposure to an employee's personal policy, and transferring to the board's fleet policy.
- To avoid personal liability, the rental contract must clearly show the Niagara Catholic District School Board as the "renter." For example, Renter: Niagara Catholic District School Board, Name of School, Name of Teacher
- When vehicles are rented to transport students the Deductible Waiver or Collision Damage Coverage from the rental agency must be purchased. Without this coverage in place, when a vehicle is rented for board purposes, the primary liability coverage comes from the personal policy of the driver, whether it be an employee or a volunteer.
- In the event of an accident, contact the car rental agency immediately.

3. Air Travel

- Air Travel shall be arranged through properly licensed travel agencies or airlines.
- Students, staff, chaperones and supervisors must purchase cancellation insurance.

References

- [Canadian Standards Association \(CSA\)](#)
- [Education Statutes and Regulations of Ontario](#)
- [Ontario Physical and Health Education Association \(OPHEA\)](#)
- [Ontario School Boards Insurance Exchange \(OSBIE\):Risk Management Advisory](#)
- [Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures](#)
 - [Volunteer Drivers \(302.4\) Administrative Operational Procedures](#)
 - [Volunteering in Catholic Schools \(800.9\) Administrative Operational Procedures](#)
 - [Student Fees \(301.11\) Administrative Operational Procedures](#)

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