



## **EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS: CO-CURRICULAR EXCURSIONS**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

## **PREAMBLE**

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: Co-Curricular.

The Board recognizes and encourages co-curricular excursions as part of a rewarding and enriching experience for all students. These excursions enhance and support activities for students that may occur outside the academic day. Students who qualify for or are invited to competitions based on their achievements and/or excellence are eligible to attend co-curricular excursions.

When planning co-curricular excursions every effort will be made to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to access all these activities. The dignity of every student and parent/guardian will be honoured in the collection of fees. If there is a direct cost to the student, participation is voluntary. Arrangements must be made for the continued education of those students not participating.

Employees of the Board can participate and accompany students on approved co-curricular excursions, as appointed by the principal/administrator, to act as a chaperone to meet the supervision requirements of the Board.

Individuals, who are not employed by the Board, and are requested by the principal/administrator and approved by the principal/administrator 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 Police Vulnerable Sector Check.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **CO-CURRICULAR EXCURSION**

A co-curricular excursion is a trip that is planned and arranged for students based on athletic achievement or co-curricular achievement/excellence. These excursions advance students to the next level of competition or participation based on prior achievement either through direct competition, qualification process or invitation. These excursions may occur during the school year and may not be directly connected to classes that participating students are currently attending and would not meet any academic expectation specific to any course.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

1. Co-curricular excursions are made available to every student who has earned the opportunity to attend; exceptions may be made at the discretion of the principal/administrator.
2. If a co-curricular excursion occurs on a Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation, every effort will be made to ensure that an appropriate liturgy, including Eucharist, is conducted for all students, staff, and supervisors. If a liturgy is not possible to be provided, an appropriate prayer service or religious observance will be provided for all students, staff, and supervisors.

3. All co-curricular excursions will follow Niagara Public Health guidelines and protocols (if required).
4. Educational field trips are an extension of the classroom and school with all expectations enforced upon departure.
5. The principal/administrator, or designate, is encouraged to work in collaboration with Student Support Services for input regarding special accommodations. Provisions are to be made for students with special education, accommodation and/or accessibility needs, with the school, student support services, the student, the student's parents/guardians, provider of transportation, and the venue of the educational field trip.
6. Students are responsible for communicating with classroom teachers about their planned absence. The teacher, in collaboration with the student and in alignment with the [Assessment, Evaluation, Reporting and Homework AOP 301.10](#) will make arrangements to maintain their academic obligations when participating in any co-curricular excursion.
7. For all OFSAA Festivals and Championships the principal/administrator will work in collaboration with the Health and Physical Education Consultant.
8. Co-curricular excursions are supervised by an employee of the Board, unless otherwise approved by the principal/administrator and shall follow the [Volunteering in Catholic Schools AOP 800.9](#).

## REQUESTS FOR CO-CURRICULAR EXCURSIONS

1. All requests must be completed on the applicable forms (see below) and submitted to the principal/administrator for approval.

### **Applicable Forms**

- [\*Request for Co-curricular Excursions Form\*](#)
  - [\*Medical Information and Participation/Acknowledgement of Risk Form\*](#)
  - [\*Airline / Tour Company / Insurance Checklist\*](#)
  - [\*Request to Transport Student Consent Form\*](#)
  - [\*Volunteer Drivers - Authorization to Transport Students\*](#)
  - [\*Reimbursement of Travel Expenses Form\*](#)
2. Co-curricular excursion requests with accommodations/transportation from a tour or travel company require three proposals outlining cost of transportation, cost of accommodations, and all other costs associated with the excursion. If the co-curricular excursion has specific contracted requirements for accommodations, a detailed explanation must be provided and approved.
  3. If the co-curricular excursion requires overnight accommodations and a tour/travel company is not being used or been exclusively required by the event organizers, three (3) quotes from accommodation or hotel vendors must be submitted. If the timing of the co-curricular excursion makes obtaining three quotes impractical, the principal will note this in the application for approval.
  4. If the co-curricular excursion requires transportation not provided by a tour/travel company, such as taxi or bus, three (3) quotes must be submitted from a transportation vendor.
  5. All requests for transportation using personal vehicles require the appropriate [Request to Transport Student Consent Form](#), [Volunteer Drivers - Authorization to Transport Students Form](#), and an estimate of travel mileage for approved reimbursement using the [Reimbursement of Travel Expenses Form](#).

6. When applicable, every effort will be made to limit the number of instructional days affected with a priority of attending events to a weekend.

## APPROVALS

1. All same day co-curricular excursions, other than OFSAA Festivals/Championships, taking place within the Niagara Region only require principal/administrator approval.
2. All co-curricular excursions for provincial or national competitions, and OFSSA Festival or Championship regardless of location, requires principal/administrative approval, the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education approval, and the Superintendent of Program and Innovation approval prior to the date of competition.

## UNAPPROVED REQUESTS

1. An unapproved request is one, which has not followed the process outlined to receive official approval or is one, which has followed the process, but has been denied. Neither the school nor the Board will sponsor, promote or participate in the planning of any unapproved co-curricular excursion.
2. Where approval has not been granted, a rationale will be provided. The principal/administrator may re-submit a proposal to the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education with the required revisions.
3. 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 co-curricular excursions with students. As well as facing disciplinary procedures, teachers involved in non-approved co-curricular excursions surrender their legal claim to the Board's liability insurance coverage and to Workers' Compensation protections.
4. All supervisors and chaperones must follow the approved itinerary. Supervisors/chaperones shall not become involved in any unapproved activities outside the scope of their supervisory duties and outside the activities put forth in their initial approval during an excursion.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION AND INFORMED CONSENT

1. All requests to attend a co-curricular excursion must be approved prior to any announcement to students or parents/guardians confirming participation in a co-curricular excursion.
2. The supervising teacher must obtain a signed copy of the appropriate NCDSB Permission/Informed Consent form prior to attending any co-curricular excursion.
  - [Permission & Informed Consent \(Day and Extended Day\)](#)
  - [Permission & Informed consent \(Overnight and Extended Overnight\)](#)
3. Completed Permission/Informed Consent forms for all co-curricular excursions shall be retained for the current school year, or until the successful completion of that co-curricular excursion.
4. All supervising teachers for athletic events must have a completed [Medical Information and Participation/Acknowledgment of Risk Form](#) prior to students participating in any athletic participation.

## EMERGENCY PLANNING

1. An itinerary of each excursion must be available in the school office in order that the principal/administrator may contact the supervising teacher in-charge if an emergency arises.

2. A list of participants including students, staff, and volunteers/chaperones must accompany the group and a copy must be submitted to the school office. If students are travelling by various means, each group and vehicle must be identified and must be in alignment with existing [Volunteer Drivers AOP 302.4](#).
3. A principal/administrator or designate from the school will be available to be contacted should an emergency arise at any time during the co-curricular excursion or if a return is delayed. Parents/Guardians are to be contacted as soon as possible.
4. The supervising teacher in-charge/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/administrator, and as determined by the principal/administrator based on the nature of the change of itinerary, communicated with parents/guardians of students on the excursion.

## SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

1. Student medical safety requirement will be outlined by parents in the [Medical Information and Participation/Acknowledgement of Risk Form](#) and all medical information will be kept confidential.
2. 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.
3. Whenever physical activities are a part of the excursion, please refer to the applicable [OPHEA Safety Guidelines](#).
4. Procedures in Cases of Student Injury or Illness:
  - a. In the event of serious injury or illness to the student, the individual nearest to the incident shall provide immediate First Aid and inform on site First Aid personnel for support.
  - b. The individual in-charge shall establish and follow an emergency action plan.
5. All Niagara Catholic District School Board students are encouraged to purchase the Accident Insurance Policy offered by the school Board each September.
6. Health Insurance must be offered and included in the cost of any Out of Province/Out of Country excursion.
7. If, as a result of discipline/safety concerns, a student is required to be sent home by the supervising teacher during a co-curricular excursion, the school and/or the Board is not responsible for any costs incurred in sending a student home. As a result of discipline/safety concern the student(s) may be required to discontinue their journey and shall not be entitled to a refund. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian 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.

## SUPERVISION

1. Students will be supervised by an employee of the Board, unless otherwise approved by the principal/administrator and Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education and shall follow the Volunteer Policy. Volunteer supervisors will be only considered after board employees have first been provided the opportunity. Every co-curricular excursion shall have a designated "Teacher in Charge"

appointed by the Principal/Administrator for the duration of the co-curricular excursion.

2. When multiple schools are attending the same event, supervision can be shared with the approval from the Family of Schools' Superintendent.
3. 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. In addition to the listed ratios, all excursions outside of Canada or the Continental United States require one additional supervisor.

Co-Curricular Excursion Supervision Ratios:

|            | <b>Same Day Events</b> | <b>Multi-Day Events<br/>(Within Canada)</b> | <b>Events Outside of Canada<br/>or Continental USA</b> |
|------------|------------------------|---|--|
| Gr. 9 - 12 | 1:20                   | 1:15  | 1:8  |

- the selection of additional supervisors/chaperones beyond the ratio will be recommended by the principal/administrator after consultation with the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education.
4. If a program includes students of both genders, and extends overnight, then supervisors/chaperones of both genders must accompany the co-curricular excursion. Under exceptional circumstances, the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education may waive this provision, parents/guardians will be notified of this documented exception, and a notation will be made on file.
  5. Principals/Administrators are required to ensure 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.
  6. Only approved chaperones/supervisors are eligible to participate in any aspect of the itinerary scheduled with the co-curricular excursion. 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 co-curricular excursion.
  7. Students or staff who request to leave the group on an approved co-curricular excursion, such as to meet a family member, must submit a request, in writing, to the principal/administrator prior to the departure of the co-curricular excursion. The principal/administrator 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/administrator, it is permitted with the conditions that:
    - the Board is not responsible for the safety of the student or staff member when away from the group;
    - 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.

## FINANCING CO-CURRICULAR EXCURSIONS

1. The Niagara Catholic District School Board School Programs Championships Budget (formerly OFSAA Budget) will allocate funds to release up to two (2) staff to attend Co-curricular Provincial and National Competition and OFSAA Championships and Festivals.
2. There shall be a cost sharing between central board funds, school generated funds and individual personal contributions to cover costs associated with individual athletes and teams that qualify for participation in an OFSAA Festival or Championship or Co-curricular Provincial and National Competition.
3. Principals are encouraged to maintain an annual school-generated “School Programs Championship” budget line to support individual athlete(s) or team participation in OFSAA Championships and Festivals and Co-curricular Provincial and National Competition.
4. All costs associated with a co-curricular excursion must be considered, itemized and included in the original application being considered by the principal/administrator.
5. Principals/Administrators must ensure that the cost to students and families is reasonable and reflects their financial needs. They are responsible for obtaining the fairest prices for transportation, accommodation, and other expenditures, ensuring all transactions comply with Board procedures and guidelines.

## REFUND OR CANCELLATION

Any co-curricular excursion may be cancelled at any time by a principal/administrator and/or Family of Schools’ Superintendent of Education, if required.

## TRANSPORTATION

1. While the Board does not recommend using private motor 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 principal/administrator.
2. In the event that privately owned automobiles are used in the transportation of students, only fully-graduated licensed drivers authorized by the principal/administrator shall be permitted to transport the students.
3. 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.
4. 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. [Request to Transport Student Consent Form](#)

5. When an activity is completed, principals/administrators 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.
6. By law, the Board cannot provide the automobile insurance for individuals and vehicles not owned by the Board. Principals/Administrators 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.
7. Individuals transporting students in private motor vehicles must 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. This Administrative Operational Procedure 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.
8. It is expected that all parents/guardians of students being transported in private motor vehicles have valid automobile insurance, including the O.P.C.F. 44R endorsement.
9. 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.
10. Where staff or parent/guardian volunteers provide transportation, a seat belt must be provided for each student.
11. Rental Vehicles: Please refer to [Volunteer Drivers AOP 302.4](#) for rental vehicle criteria.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

1. All overnight co-curricular excursions accommodations must be in alignment with the [Ontario Human Rights Commission Requirements](#).

### **References**

- [Canadian Standards Association \(CSA\)](#)
- [Education Statutes and Regulations of Ontario](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)
- [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 \(302.4\) AOP](#)
- [Volunteering in Catholic Schools \(800.9\) AOP](#)
- [Student Fees \(301.11\) AOP](#)

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