

CODE: GICA.AR

EFFECTIVE DATE: (05-07-2013)

TOPIC: Field Trips

ISSUE DATE: (22-01-2025)

REVIEW YEAR: (2032)

OBJECTIVE

To articulate the Superintendent's requirements for the organization, supervision, documentation and approval of field trips to ensure a focus on student learning outcomes and the safety of students.

DEFINITIONS

Field trip is a school activity that occurs outside the boundaries of the student's school, designed to support the student in:

- learning specific curricular outcomes for courses that the student is enrolled in; or
- co-curricular activities such as athletics or student leadership.

Note: For the purposes of this regulation, off-campus courses and work-study programs as outlined in Administrative Regulation GAA.AR – Off-Campus Education, are not considered to be field trips.

High-risk activity is an activity listed by our Division insurance broker as one that has contributed to the most serious claims across Canada.

Parent(s) includes all legal guardian(s) or independent students.

Principal includes the:

- principal of a school; or
- director of Metro Continuing Education.

Student(s) includes funded children in Early Education, Early Learning and Kindergarten Programs as well as student(s) as defined within the *Alberta Education Funding Manual*.

Supervisor includes any staff member or registered volunteer, as per FBCE.AR Volunteers – Registration and Records Checks accompanying students on a field trip.

Teacher-leader is a teacher from the school or an instructor with Metro Continuing Education designated by the principal to be in charge of the field trip.

RESPONSIBILITY

1. Division Support Services will be responsible for providing advice and assistance to support principals in meeting all requirements of this regulation and exercising due diligence on behalf of the Division to ensure student safety. Division Support Services will:
 - identify best practices, and develop common forms, templates and processes to support schools in meeting the requirements of this regulation;

- review both out-of-province field trip and high-risk field trip packages on behalf of the Assistant Superintendent; and
 - receive, for inclusion in the database, signed checklists for any in-province, low risk overnight field trips.
2. Principals will be responsible for:
 - ensuring adequate preparation and supervision for all field trips;
 - ensuring all Division approved field trip forms and templates are used in preparing the field trip package;
 - designating a teacher-leader to be in charge of each field trip on the principal's behalf to ensure planning, supervision, communication, and approval is in compliance with this regulation;
 - providing to parents a *Field Trip Waiver Request: Notice to Parents* when a third party requires a waiver to be signed by parents;
 - approving each proposed field trip; and
 - providing final approval for in-province, low risk overnight field trips on behalf of the school or submitting completed packages for both out-of-province field trips and high-risk field trips to Division Support Services.
 3. Principals can deny any child access to a particular activity. When a principal denies access to a field trip they must provide the rationale to the parents.
 4. Assistant Superintendents will be responsible for:
 - approving all field trips involving high risk activities; and
 - approving all out-of-province field trips.
 5. The Superintendent of Schools reserves the right to cancel or alter a field trip at any time. No request for compensation will be considered.

REGULATION

1. Each field trip will have received the appropriate level of vetting and approval, including where appropriate, the Assistant Superintendent's, prior to:
 - any information being sent home to parents or commitments being made to students and parents;
 - any contracts being signed, or commitments being made, to vendors or service providers;
 - any funds being expended; and
 - any money or deposits being collected from, or on behalf of, students and or parents.
2. For all in-province low risk overnight field trips, the principal will review arrangements and document approval of the field trip by completing, dating and signing the *Overnight Field Trip Checklist: In-Province/Low Risk* and attaching all information provided to parents. A copy of the completed and signed checklist will be submitted to Division Support Services, on behalf of the Assistant Superintendent, at least one week prior to the field trip.
3. For field trips involving high-risk activities, and for all out-of-province field trips, the principal will review arrangements and document approval of the field trip by completing, dating and signing the *Overnight Field Trip Checklist: Out-of-Province and/or High Risk*. The checklist and all information to be provided to students and parents will be submitted to Division Support Services on behalf of the Assistant Superintendent, as follows:

- a minimum of six weeks prior to departure for field trips involving either high-risk activities or for out-of-province field trips within Canada and the continental United States; and
- a minimum of six months prior to departure for out-of-province field trips involving travel outside of Canada and the continental United States.

A. SUPERVISION:

1. No teacher will be assigned instructional time specifically to organize field trips.
2. Each field trip will have a designated teacher-leader in charge. The teacher-leader will be in attendance for the duration of any high risk; overnight; or out-of-province field trips. For all other field trips, when a principal deems it appropriate, the teacher-leader may have an alternate assigned to be present on a field trip.
 - a. The teacher-leader on all out-of-province trips will provide a daily update by phone or email to Division Support Services.
 - b. The teacher-leader will provide a report by phone or email to Division Support Services in the event of unusual circumstances resulting in a major modification to the itinerary of the field trip.
 - c. The teacher-leader will immediately report any serious injury, ambulance call out, or hospital visit to:
 - Division Support Services during business hours; or
 - Security Services after business hours.
 - d. Whether or not the teacher-leader is present on a field trip, the teacher-leader must always have overall responsibility for the field trip to ensure compliance of the field trip with this regulation. The teacher-leader will ensure that supervision is available at all times and that supervisors are prepared to deal with any emergencies that may arise. The supervisory arrangements will consider:
 - the age, maturity, needs and ability levels of the students;
 - the inherent risk of the activity; and
 - the circumstances of the particular activity.
 - e. The teacher-leader will be familiar with, and conduct a safety assessment of, the proposed site of the field trip.
 - f. The teacher-leader will ensure that training, preparation, orientation and expectations are provided to all students and supervisors.
 - g. The teacher-leader will be responsible for ensuring, prior to travel beginning, that proof of additional medical coverage is collected from students and supervisors for international trips.
 - h. The teacher-leader will be responsible for ensuring that the following items are present and readily available on field trips:
 - list of student participants;
 - phone contact numbers of parents;
 - Alberta Health Care numbers of participants;
 - information regarding medication and medi-alert needs of participants; and
 - an appropriately equipped portable first aid kit. Occupational Health and Safety Code provides information on the contents of first aid kits (see Schedule 2, Table 3). The type of kit required relative to the number of participants (see Schedule 2, Table 5) can be found by following the link.
3. Where a principal deems it appropriate or where it is required by law, supervision will include individuals suitably trained in first aid. Staff can access first aid training from a vendor approved by Purchasing and Contract Services. Alternatively, first aid training can be obtained from another vendor. In this case, the

principal is required to ensure that any vendor not on the approved Division list has appropriate training, insurance and certification, and is offering a course approved by *Alberta Workplace Health and Safety*.

4. On overnight field trips involving students of both genders, male and female supervisors will be present, and on other field trips when necessary.
5. For high-risk activities, competent instruction and supervision in these activities are mandatory. Competence may be established by virtue of a certificate from a governing body for activities such as skiing and canoeing. In areas where certificates are not issued, competency may be recognized by virtue of experience and demonstrated expertise in the activity.
6. A principal may authorize persons other than teachers to provide supervision or instruction when warranted by the nature of the specific field trip, to meet the safety requirements of this regulation.
7. Only assigned teachers and authorized supervisors will accompany students on a field trip. Volunteers must be approved as a supervisor by the principal and are required to complete the following forms, as stated in GBCE.AR – Volunteers – Registration and Records Checks:
 - Volunteer Registration Form;
 - Police Information Check; and
 - where required, Volunteer Driver Form.
8. Where a school has only one or two qualifying students for a field trip, a teacher from another Edmonton Public School which is also sending students, may agree, with their principal's approval, to be designated as the teacher-leader for the field trip and assume supervision of the one or two students. This could occur for field trips such as provincials for badminton, wrestling, or a student leadership conference. A Field Trip Notice: *Alternative Supervision Form* must accompany the *Field Trip Information* and *Parental Consent Form*. The requirement for adherence to all other sections of this regulation remains. In situations where a school is sending three or more students on a field trip, it is expected that a teacher-leader from the school be assigned.
9. When necessary, principals are expected to seek advice and assistance from experts in planning field trips and in assessing risk. The following are recommended personnel and publications:
 - a. Personnel:
 - Division Support Services
 - Human Resources
 - Division insurance contact (Financial Services)
 - Division General Counsel
 - other senior staff
 - b. Publications:
 - *Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools*
 - *Occupational Health Code 2009*
 - *The Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation*

B. FIELD TRIP CONSENT FORMS:

1. Prior to each field trip, written parental consent will be obtained for each participating student. The *Field Trip Consent and Authorization Form* is available for schools on the Division intranet under Division Support Services.

2. In order to ensure informed consent, the teacher-leader must utilize the standard *Parental Consent and Authorization Form* as prepared by the Division, and provide parents the following information in writing:
 - purpose or educational goal of the field trip relative to the specific learner outcomes of the course the student is enrolled in;
 - proposed itinerary;
 - description of the activities or events proposed;
 - an indication of extraordinary or unusual hazards that may be encountered on the field trip;
 - safety precautions in place to deal with activities involving risk, including, when appropriate, the name of the designated first-aider and the expiry date of their certificates;
 - emergency procedures to be followed in the event of injury, illness or unusual circumstances;
 - method(s) of transportation to be used;
 - arrangements for supervision; and
 - cost to the student.
3. Parental consent forms will:
 - include consent from parents authorizing the supervisors to arrange for necessary medical treatment;
 - include contingency plans in the event of cancellation, adverse weather and road conditions, or other conditions that may require a change to the original itinerary;
 - specifically require parents, or a qualified instructor, to indicate a child's skill level in swimming, skiing or snowboarding and in any high-risk activity. For skiing and snowboarding, the Division *Levels of Ability - Ski Form* or *Levels of Ability - Snowboarding Form* must be used;
 - provide for parents to be able to consent to particular activities, and withhold consent with respect to others in relation to the same field trip;
 - include information that the Superintendent of Schools reserves the right to cancel or modify any trip and that no request for compensation will be entertained; and
 - include notification to parents that photos or videos of students attending or participating in a field trip, that is open to the general public, may be taken by participants, others, or the media, and that Edmonton Public Schools cannot control or prevent the further distribution of these images.
4. Special provisions may be required when seeking permission from parents if language, literacy, or cultural barriers exist.
5. For school activities that involve more than one trip outside the boundaries of the school such as swimming lessons, physical education classes, outdoor education classes, and interschool sports within the league, a single parental consent will suffice if the information to the parent includes both a schedule and dates of all activities. Should any of these be high-risk activities, separate field trip parental consents must be obtained.
6. A single parental consent will suffice for scheduled and unscheduled walking field trips in the neighbourhood of the school.
7. Supervisors should not entertain major deviations to the proposed itinerary of any field trip once parental consent has been received.

C. FIELD TRIP RECORDS:

If the principal believes that the records pertaining to a field trip might be important because of an incident that occurs on the field trip, then the principal must retain those records in accordance with CN.AR - Creation, Use and Maintenance of Division Information.

The schools will keep a record for two years of each field trip, which will include:

- principal authorization;
- Assistant Superintendent's authorization, where required;
- parental consent;
- all information provided to parents;
- any copies of passports or immunization records, where required;
- list of participating students; and
- list of supervisors.

REFERENCES

CN.AR - Creation, Use and Maintenance of Division Information

DEAC.AR - Chartering of Buses by Schools

DEBA.AR - School-Purchased Vehicles

DIBA.AR - Liability Insurance

FA.BP - Human Resources Framework

FBCE.AR - Volunteers – Registration and Records Checks

GA.BP - Student Programs of Study

GAA.AR - Off-Campus Education

Alberta Bill of Rights

Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Code – Schedule 2, Tables 3 and 5

Division Support Services:

- Field Trip Consent Form
- Field Trip Waiver Request: Notice to Parents
- The Field Trip Information and Parental Consent and Authorization Form
- Overnight Field Trip Checklist: In-Province/Low Risk
- Overnight Field Trip Checklist: Out-of-Province and/or High Risk
- Levels of Ability - Ski Form
- Levels of Ability - Snowboarding Form

Purchasing and Contract Services