



# SO15 Out of Classroom Field Trips and Excursions

## Category I Manual

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## CATEGORY I

Category I	Approval	Approval Lead Time	Insurance
Day Trips, In-province, departing and returning on the same day and not involving activities of increased inherent risk (All trips must occur between the first and last day of school)	Principal	Two weeks prior to the trip	Recommended

### 1. Supervision Ratio

- 1.1 Trip supervisors must include at least one certified teacher employed by the Board.
- 1.2 Staff and volunteer supervisors are not allowed to bring their children who are not part of the trip.
- 1.3 The minimum supervision ratio should be exceeded to give special consideration to the physical, emotional, medical and behavioural needs of any students participating in the trip.
- 1.4 The ratio may be also exceeded when taking into consideration the nature of the activity including consideration of risks or as mandated by the facility.
- 1.5 Supervision Ratios must be met during any mode of transportation.
- 1.6 OPHEA Safety Guideline supervision ratios must be adhered to wherever they are lower than in this Policy.

Category I Trips	
Grade	Ratio Supervisors : Students
Kindergarten	1:8
Grades 1 - 8	1:10
Grades 9 - 12	1:15

### 2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that all Board policies and procedures related to out-of-classroom experiences are followed by all board employees and volunteers.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of the teacher and principal when planning out-of-classroom experiences to follow and implement all Board policies and procedures within the appropriate timelines.
- 2.3 A student may be denied participation on a school trip based on a demonstrated inability to follow school behaviour guidelines.
- 2.4 Consideration must be given to the possibility that a student may have to return to the school or home prior to the completion of the trip.
- 2.5 Duties of non-teaching personnel, adult volunteers, and coaches will be assigned by the teacher in consultation with the principal, and may include specific supervision responsibilities.
- 2.6 Learning expectations for the trip will be established early in the planning process.
- 2.7 Principal approval is secured before any commitments are made to agents, organizers, parents, or students. Teacher to principal communication about the trip is continuous and on-going.

- 2.8 The principal or teacher shall accompany the students and shall act as head supervisor for all out-of-classroom activities.
- 2.9 The responsibility of the supervisor is to take reasonable steps to reduce the risks of injuries. This responsibility includes being prepared for emergencies and providing communication to parents/guardians as quickly as possible in the event of a health or safety concern for the student(s). Supervisors must conform to OPHEA Safety Standards.
- 2.10 For Extra-Curricular activities please refer to AM-08.

### 3. Planning for Inclusive and Accessible Field Trips

- 3.1 When the field trip is in the planning stage, consult with parents/guardians of young students as well as older students about any fears/anxieties or potential barriers on the trip. Don't presume full knowledge of a student's needs because of a disability.
- 3.2 Always inquire about the accessibility of the field trip location, including washrooms and lunch areas, ahead of time. Usually, this requires a simple phone call. Does the site have a calming/sensory space for students who might become overstimulated? Larger sites often have specific accessibility staff that can help. Check out the Toronto Star Ontario Field Trip Guide to determine the accessibility of many popular destinations:  
[www.classroomconnection.ca/fieldtrip.html](http://www.classroomconnection.ca/fieldtrip.html)
- 3.3 Identify potential challenges and rehearse with the child ahead of time. Create a social story to make the trip as predictable as possible. Ensure that essential self-regulation tools (comfort objects, fidgets, weighted vests, special foods, quiet space) are available on the trip.
- 3.4 Check and double-check that accessible transportation has been confirmed. Contact Phil Kuckyt ([pkuckyt@stsbhn.ca](mailto:pkuckyt@stsbhn.ca)) with any concerns around funding accessible transportation.
- 3.5 Ensure that any support staff requirements have been arranged (there is no admission cost for support workers who are required to assist a person with a disability). Contact your Teacher Consultant, Special Education with any concerns.
- 3.6 Make arrangements for any students who do not go on the trip. They should not be expected to stay home. Since field trips are meant to support curriculum expectations, trips should not exclude any students unless there is no other way to access that curriculum expectation.
- 3.7 Promote the connection between all peers participating in field trips or any school special events. Ensure that the student with a disability is not required to just watch from the sidelines.

### 4. Multiple Event Trips and Short Excursions

- 4.1 For short excursions within normal school hours, a 'multiple-event' Informed Consent Form may be obtained at the beginning of the school year or semester (ie. neighbourhood walks, skating programs, or health and physical education programs, construction projects). (Appendix B)
- 4.2 For short excursions within regular school hours, trip supervisors must: follow classroom supervision ratios; have parental permission; consider age, ability and any required special supervision; consider transportation and number of students.

## 5. File Retention

- 5.1 Field Trips/Education Outside the Classroom: The school is responsible for keeping all documents on site for 1 year; offsite in a board-designated storage area for 3 years; for a total of 4 years.

## 6. Insurance

### 6.1 *Students*

- a. The Board does not provide insurance for students against any accidental death, disability, dismemberment or medical expenses that might occur as a result of an accident during school activities, including sporting events and trips.
- b. Grand Erie District School Board requires that all parents/guardians declare whether or not they have accident insurance. The declaration form is sent home at the beginning of the school year and kept on file at the school.
- c. The Board offers information on a protection plan that is made available to the parent/guardian to purchase for their students (Insure My Kids Protection Plan). This plan can be purchased throughout the year.

### 6.2 *Grand Erie District School Board Employees*

- a. Employees are provided with Workplace Insurance benefits provided by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) while acting within the scope of their duties on behalf of the board. All employee accidents must be reported according to Administrative Procedure HR 121.

### 6.3 *Volunteers and Chaperones*

- a. The Board does not provide insurance for volunteers or chaperones against any accidental death, disability, dismemberment or medical/dental expenses that might occur as a result of accidents during their involvement in school activities, including sporting events and field trips.

### 6.4 *Confirmation of Insurance*

- a. Proof of adequate commercial general liability insurance is required through a Certificate of Insurance from venues and service providers who are privately owned and operated independently, including and not limited to rock climbing zip lining, inflatables, summer camps, family farms. Large established public venues, such as Canada's Wonderland, Rogers Centre, Royal Ontario Museum, Maid of the Mist, CN Tower, Canadian War Plane Heritage Museum, Toronto Zoo, and Ontario Science Centre would not be required to provide proof of insurance.

## 7. Transportation

- 7.1 Transportation methods (i.e. train, boat, other) other than busing or taxi through approved vendors, is beyond the approval level of the Principal for Category 1 and requires approval of the Superintendent.
- 7.2 Transportation must be appropriate to the age of the students. Provincial legislation regarding child car-seats must be followed.
- 7.3 Depending on the nature of the trip, evaluate the transportation needs taking into consideration the age of the participants, distance of the trip and required accommodations.
- 7.4 For kindergarten and primary out of classroom trips, where transportation is required, students must travel by **bus only**.

## 7.5 Vehicle Restrictions

- a. 9+ passenger vans (driver plus eight students) are not permitted for student transportation. Board staff shall not use or rent such vehicles for student transportation.

## 7.6 If bussing or taxi is required, the following steps must be completed

- a. Obtain a quote through an approved Board vendor.
- b. Complete a purchase requisition through the current purchasing system identifying the key transportation requirements of the trip.
- c. Board staff will process the requisition and forward the completed copy to the school and successful vendor.
- d. Vendors submit invoices directly to Student Transportation Services Brant Haldimand Norfolk for verification and payment.
- e. Cancellations or changes must be made within 48 of the scheduled departure so as to avoid cancellation or change fees.
- f. Please refer to the Staff Portal > Purchasing > What to Buy and Where: [Transportation](#) for instructions on booking various modes of transportation; and [Travel and Tour Operators](#) to locate the approved transportation vendor listing.

## 8. Volunteer Drivers Information

- 8.1 Students can only be transported in privately-owned or rented vehicles by staff or volunteers who possess a valid G Licence and a minimum of \$2 million of liability insurance.

- 8.2 All volunteer drivers must have completed and signed a Volunteer Driver Form, Appendix E.

## 9. Vehicle Liability Insurance

- 9.1 Staff and Volunteers should be aware that under the Insurance Act of Ontario the insurance of the driver/owner of the vehicle is the primary policy accessed for claims. The Board does provide liability coverage for employees and volunteers providing transportation on approved out-of-classroom programs. Volunteer drivers and the vehicle owners should check with their insurance providers ensure their policy permits them to transport students for “educational purposes”.

### Category I Checklist

Trip Destination: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

			✓ or N/A
1.	Appendix A	Request for Approval – Completed and Approved by Principal	
2.	Appendix B	Informed parent/guardian Consent Form Completed	
3.	Appendix C	Release and Indemnification Form (18+ years of age) Completed	
4.	Appendix D	Volunteer Supervisor Release and Indemnification Form Completed	
5.	Appendix E	Volunteer Drivers – Authorization to Transport Form Completed	
6.		Have considered the accessibility of this trip/location for all students in my class	
7.		Transportation arranged and outlined in Appendix A. Special transportation confirmed if any students/staff/volunteers have accessibility needs	
8.		Arrangements made for accessible washrooms, sensory break spaces, etc. as required	
9.		Print off Insurance Declaration via PowerSchool and ensure all parents/guardians have completed the declaration.	
10.		Principal Approval & Signature Obtained	
11.		Money collected & submitted to office	
12.		Coverage arranged for teacher's and supervision duties	
13.		Plan in place for early return of a student and supervisor	
14.		Post-trip activities planned	
15.		Detailed Program Itinerary Provided to Principal	
16.		Provision for emergency first aid	
17.		SO30 Management of Potentially Life-Threatening Health Conditions in Schools has been reviewed	
18.	Appendix A/B	Include copy in teacher's package with student information	

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Submit to Principal prior to departure