

# AP 340 INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL & FIELD TRIPS POLICY #340



## RATIONALE:

Field trips are an important component of the educational process and are supported and encouraged. Effective learning experiences often result from first-hand observation of, or participation in, events or activities that occur out in the community away from the school. It is of paramount importance that field trips are selected, planned, organized, **and conducted in the context of:**

- Clear and intentional educational benefit to students
- Inclusion of all students
- Safety and security of all participants
- Risk assessment and management of off-site activities
- Protection of students, staff, volunteers, and the School District.

This administrative procedure sets out the responsibilities, processes, and forms that apply.

## PROCESS:

1. Class or school walking activities arranged by classroom teachers are not considered formal field trips. Schools may arrange for an annual blanket permission form for these activities to be signed by the parents or guardians and kept on file at the school. The form will outline the nature of the activities and any risks. Parents will be notified in advance of each occurrence as appropriate to allow for appropriate dress or preparation. The Principal will be notified anytime classes will be away from the school.
2. All school field trips must have the approval of the Principal and the parents or guardians of the student(s).
3. All school field trips authorized by the Principal must have a sound educational rationale. The rationale should be based on providing clear educational benefits. Whether the field trip meets this standard will be determined by the Principal in conjunction with the Assistant Superintendent.
4. Field trips are planned with inclusion of all students in the classroom community as the starting point.
5. Field trips are part of the educational program and are not earned by students as a reward or withheld as punishment.
6. The safety, security, supervision, and well-being of students must be the prime considerations when planning a trip.
7. The planning shall make provision for appropriate levels of supervision, known individual student needs, hazards of the trip, and supervision concerns in general.
8. Field trips requiring Board or Superintendent approval will be submitted by the Principal, using the appropriate form with all required attachments, and in accordance with the stated timelines (below).

9. The school's code of conduct and rules apply during all trips.
10. Principals must ensure that suitably qualified employees and approved volunteers are selected for supervisory responsibilities.
11. On field trips all students and chaperones are under the direction of the teacher in charge.
12. Where the sponsor/chaperone's costs will be borne in whole or in part by the students, this arrangement must be made known to parents and students before any monies are collected.
13. Parents or guardians must be notified of the supervisory arrangements in place.
14. Parents or guardians must be notified of the travel arrangements and provide approval prior to travel.
15. For overnight travel, adult chaperones, sponsors, or coaches of the same gender as the students must accompany the group. Each must have successfully completed a criminal reference check.
16. In situations where there is potential danger or moderate to high risk it is expected that students will remain under direct adult supervision.

## **2. APPROVAL & PERMISSION FORMS:**

Field trips require parent permission slips which, for legal purposes, must be kept on file for 5 years following the trip.

Schools will use the district field trip approval system in the SD27 Portal for applying and approving field trips.

Schools will include the following information on the forms:

1. The activities and date(s)
2. Transportation arrangements
3. Supervision arrangements
4. Costs if any
5. What to bring
6. A description of known risks associated with the activity
7. A statement of educational objectives and a description of how the activity is related to the curriculum.
8. Other considerations or relevant information

Pre-approval for all trips must be obtained within the appropriate timelines. Trip approval may be considered with less notice in emergent circumstances but the reasons for late submission must be clearly stated in the application.

Type	Approval	Notice
In-District	Principal	2 weeks
Low risk	Principal	2 weeks
Out-of-District	Superintendent or Delegate	1 month
Moderate Risk Activity	Superintendent or Delegate	1 month
Special Field Trips	Approval	Notice
Student missing 5 + days	Board	3 months
International	Board	10 months
Out-of-Province	Board	3 months
High risk activity	Board	3 months

**Note:** Extra-curricular sports travel in or out of district in BC is approved at the school level.

### 3. RISK

Principals are responsible for the school level assessment of the activities planned for a field trip with respect to the level of risk involved, and for ensuring that the proper level of approval is obtained.

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 be individually contacted by a school staff member to discuss the trip prior to the school accepting written consent from them.

#### Examples of Risk Associated with Activities

Low	Moderate	High
Camping overnight in permanent structures	Students overnight in tents; occasional bear / cougar sightings	High probability or frequent reports /sightings of bears, cougars
Boat trips on chartered service	Canoe trip on flat water on smaller body of water	Crossing large lakes, ocean kayaking/canoeing
Nature hike on groomed trails	Hiking on steeper terrain, risk of injury associated with a fall	Mountain climbing- risk of serious injury or death associated with a fall
Swimming in guarded pool	Students swimming at lake with lifeguard present	
Skating at arena	Skating on Lake	
Cross country skiing	Downhill skiing	Backcountry skiing
Bike ride in neighbourhood of school	Mountain biking	Adventure sports – zip line, parachuting, river rafting/kayaking

#### **4. EXTENDED, OUT-OF-PROVINCE OR HIGH RISK**

Field trips including extended travel (where students miss five or more school days), out-of-province travel (including international) or trips with high-risk activities require Board approval. These are considered special trips.

When planning is in the early stages for international trips, written application for approval in principle should be submitted to the Board. Approximate details regarding all travel arrangements should be submitted at least 3 months prior (10 months for international) with a request for final approval.

The school Principal is responsible for assessing and approving details and protocols associated with the field trip. These responsibilities will include, though not necessarily limited to, defining:

**4.1 Supervision:** lead supervisor; chaperones and appropriate adult-to-student ratios (given risk assessment); parameters, roles, and responsibilities of chaperones; level of supervision increases as particular locations have a higher safety or risk assessment.

**4.2 Finance:** funding sources and expenditures; financial report to Secretary-Treasurer outlining funding sources, expenditures, supervision financing details, cost to students and details on any corporate incentives offered.

**4.3 Educational Purpose:** rationale for field trip as it relates to destination(s), itinerary, and activities in association with curriculum or school activities; rationale for duration and timing during instructional time.

**4.3 Risk & Liability:** which field trips are the school/district's liability, and which field trips are the personal/private organization's liability. Other factors are associated risk levels and necessary insurance requirements.

**4.4 Permission:** protocols for parent permission and communication before consent is provided by parents:

- Low to moderate risk: permission form must clearly outline the details and safety, or risk factors associated with the field trip
- High risk: supervisors must meet with parents to outline details of the field trip and the safety or risk factors associated with the field trip. Parents who do not attend the meeting must be followed up with prior to them providing permission.

**4.5 Timing:** loss of instructional time.

#### **All field trips must comply with District Policies:**

**Policy - 340** - International Travel & Field Trips

**Policy - 380** - Inclusion

**Policy - 390** - Safe and Caring School Community

**Policy - 240** - Volunteers in Schools

**Policy - 770** - Transportation of Students