



OFF-CAMPUS – CATEGORY I and II Trips

Responsibility:	<i>Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board</i>
Legal References:	<i>Travel Industry Act, 2002, S.O. 2002, Ontario Regulation 26/05: General Travel Industry Act, 2002, S.O. 2002, Chapter 30, Schedule D.</i>
Related References:	<i>Administrative Procedure 1590 – Transportation – Off-Campus; Administrative Procedure 4360 – Principles of Business Conduct For Board Employees; Administrative Procedure 1581 – Category III – Out of Province and Out of Country Trips; Administrative Procedure 3770 – Criminal Reference Checks; FS-19-RS4 – Volunteer Driver – Authorization to Transport Students; IS-11-FA – Off-campus Categories I; IS-09-FB – Off-campus Categories II, III; IS-09-F-6 – Off-Campus Medical Information and Consent (For Category II or III Trips); IS-11-00 – Administration of Medication IS-04-F-1 – Field Trip Information for Parents/Guardians; IS-10-F-2 – Parent/Guardian Consent Form for Field Trip; IS-04-F-3 – Parent/Guardian Consent Form for On-Going Off-Campus Activities; Off-campus Sample Objectives; Waterloo Region District School Board Off-Campus Excursions – Approved Vendor List; Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada website; Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (Ophea) Safety Standards of Education.</i>
Reviewed:	January 2016
Revisions:	December 2019

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The procedure that follows provides guidelines and expectations for the selection and approval of off-campus activities, and the responsibilities of the school principal or designate. The nature of, and procedures for, Category I and Category II trips are given, and guidelines regarding supervision and appropriate supervisor/student ratios are outlined. Accessibility, equity and inclusion of each and every student must be considered when selecting off campus activities and transportation. Individualization of transportation needs must be considered based on student needs.

2. Definitions

2.1 Category I Trip:

A teacher organized trip or excursion of one day or less (i.e. Museum, Art Gallery, Pioneer Village, local historical sites). Category I trips do not involve Alpine (downhill) skiing, snowboarding or water activities.

2.2 Category II Trip:

A teacher-organized trip lasting more than one day within Ontario not requiring air transportation

OR

A day trip outside of Ontario

OR

A 'High Risk Activity'. High Risk Activities include activities that take place in a pool or on a body of water (e.g. swimming, canoeing, waterparks), Alpine (downhill) skiing and snowboarding.

2.3 Category III Trip:

A trip lasting more than one day within Ontario requiring air transportation

OR

A trip lasting more than one day outside of Ontario

See Administrative Procedure 1581 – Category III – Out of Province and Out of Country Trips

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1 Off-campus excursions should be directly linked to specific expectations of the Ontario Curriculum.
- 3.2 Disruptions to the student's regular learning environment should be minimized.
- 3.3 The benefits of an off-campus excursion should enhance the learning that would have normally occurred in the regular learning environment.
- 3.4 Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure the safety of students/staff, as well as limit risk to the Board.
- 3.5 Efforts must be made to provide students with equity of access to off-campus excursions.

4. Curriculum Rationale

- 4.1 The curriculum, as defined by the Ministry of Education, comprises all of the students' school-related experiences. It includes program content and all the activities and experiences derived from it; learning resources; teaching strategies; procedures relating to discipline and evaluation; and the interactions of staff, students, and others in the course of school activities.
- 4.2 Curriculum also includes experiences that derive from social interaction in the classroom, the school, and the community at large. Peer relationships and informal interactions with school staff and community members have an important bearing on students' attitudes and values. Such interactions occur in a variety of settings, including the classroom, halls, lunchroom, playground, and school bus, and during co-curricular activities.
- 4.3 It is important for students to be able to relate what they learn in school to a larger context. Learning is enhanced when skills, knowledge and attitudes are taught in the context of the real world. Off-campus experiences provide that context.

5. School Based Planning for Off-Campus Activities

- 5.1 It is essential that schools enter a planning process when examining off-campus activities. Through appropriate planning, schools can ensure that the Waterloo Region DSB Off-Campus Guiding Principles are met. Consideration of accessibility, equity and inclusion must be considered.
- 5.2 Principal responsibilities include:
 - 5.2.1 Share the Waterloo Region DSB Off-Campus Guiding Principles with staff.

- 5.2.2 Develop an annual plan of off-campus activities that will be occurring at the school. When possible, this plan should be coordinated with other excursions.
- 5.2.3 Ensure, through advanced planning, that efforts are made to increase opportunities for students to participate in off-campus excursions. Consider a student's IEP, safety plan, transition plan, parent input.
- 5.2.4 Ensure off-campus trips are not planned on Board PA Days and Exam Days (Field Trips and Extra-curricular activities).

6. Risk Management

- 6.1 For the purpose of risk management, please ensure the following criteria are met:
 - 6.1.1 All off-campus excursions must operate during the regular school year (between the first day of school and the last day of school).
 - 6.1.2 It is recognized that some off-campus excursions will occur outside of Canada. Refer to Administrative Procedure 1581 – Out of Province and Out of Country Trips for the processes to be followed.
 - 6.1.3 Off-campus excursions must not involve the use of large vans. (max 7 seats plus the driver).
 - 6.1.4 All individuals traveling outside of Ontario must have appropriate out of province medical coverage.
 - 6.1.5 Any activities occurring on the trip must meet the requirements of the OPHEA Safety Standards (<http://safety.ophea.net>).
- 6.2 Part of the planning process should include contingency arrangements for unforeseen situations where the excursion may need to be cancelled. These plans should include the recouping of deposits already collected.
- 6.3 Staff should not charge any expenses to their personal credit card or bank account unless the staff member is dealing with an emergency situation.
- 6.4 School Staff is required to disclose to parents in writing, all monetary incentives being received as a result of their involvement and/or participation in the current excursion, as compensation for their services. Such benefit(s) must be used during the current excursion, only. To ensure transparency, accountability and adherence to AP 4360 – Principles of Business Conduct for Board Employees, no future incentives or gratuitous benefits are allowed.
- 6.5 If and/or when swimming (competitive, instructional, leisure, survival) or Alpine (downhill) skiing, snowboarding or tubing or other extra-curricular activities of a "Risk" or "High" risk nature, refer to the current OPHEA Safety Standards.

7. Guidelines for the Selection and Approval of Category I and Category II Off-Campus Activities

- 7.1 There must be clear curriculum outcomes for the activity for off-campus trips. These outcomes/expectations should be listed from related ministry curriculum documents.
- 7.2 The location for the activity must be both relevant in terms of requisite learning, and appropriate in terms of accessibility, cost, and uniqueness of the site. Schools are encouraged to select more local destinations if the same learning can occur.
- 7.3 There must be demonstrated pre-, during- and post-learning activities consistent with the specific expectations of the Ontario Curriculum.
- 7.4 There should be an expectation that all students attend to satisfy the learning outcomes articulated for the activity.
- 7.5 Off-Campus excursions should be planned in such a way as to ensure that students do not miss more than five (5) consecutive school days.

- 7.6 There must be meaningful alternative activities, which are consistent with the outcomes provided for non-attendees.
- 7.7 All excursions are considered off-campus and should be supported by the completion of the appropriate forms.
- 7.8 Situations will arise where a trip is not deemed to meet the guiding principles of this document. This decision can be made by the Principal, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being or Coordinating Council. If a staff member continues to plan the trip outside of the jurisdiction of the Waterloo Region DSB, the employee will be informed by their supervisor of the following:
- 7.8.1 The employee must share with potential participants that the trip is not operating under the jurisdiction of the Waterloo Region DSB;
- 7.8.2 The employee may not use Waterloo Region DSB facilities or resources to promote the trip, such as:
- Flyers cannot be sent home with students;
 - An information session cannot be held at the school;
 - The staff member cannot promote the trip during the regular school day or at sanctioned school related activities.

8. Supervision

- 8.1 A supervision plan for overnight trips is to be completed prior to the trip and shared at the parents' information meeting. Students must be supervised at all times. Security may be hired but teachers must be present at all times. Submissions with "free time" or "time on your own" will not be approved.
- 8.2 Infractions regarding inappropriate student behaviour will be investigated by a teacher. Consequences will be determined by school discipline procedures.
- 8.3 Students 18 years of age or older (with a criminal check) can supervise elementary school trips but not secondary school students.

9. Ratio of Supervisors/Students for Off-Campus Excursions

- 9.1 See Appendix I for a chart outlining ratios between supervisors and students for off-campus Category I and Category II excursions. The ratios are suggestions and have been developed over the years with the safety of the students in mind.
- 9.2 It is the responsibility of the principal and teacher(s) concerned to ensure that appropriate supervisor/student ratios for all off-campus excursions is adhered to. Increasing the ratio of supervisor to student beyond the recommended percentage is not an appropriate strategy ('Over Supervision' should not occur where the cost to students would increase).
- 9.3 All adults accompanying a trip must commit to the standards and expectations associated with supervising students as per this Administrative Procedure and the OPHEA Safety Standards (<http://safety.ophea.net>). It is expected that these standards are adhered to by supervisors throughout the entire duration of the off-campus excursion.
- 9.4 Non-Board personnel acting as adult supervisors on overnight excursions will be asked to provide a Vulnerable Sector Check prior to the start of the off-campus excursion. Any non-board volunteers who are in direct contact with students in a setting that is unsupervised by a staff member will be required to submit a Vulnerable Sector Check. Visit <https://recordcheck.wrps.on.ca/> to request your Vulnerable Sector Check.
- 9.5 A supervisor is any person deemed by the teacher and principal to be sufficiently responsible and able

to provide adequate care for the students involved in the activity (i.e. EA's, student teachers, parents, volunteers, co-op students in elementary schools).

9.6 The teacher(s), as well as other supervisors, are included when calculating the supervisor/student ratio. A minimum of one employee of the Board (teacher; educational assistant; child youth worker; etc.) must be a supervisor involved in the excursion.

9.7 Due to the particular uniqueness of special education situations, the supervisor/student ratio will reflect the needs of students. The principal and teacher(s) concerned must decide upon appropriate ratios for exceptional students.

10. Category I Trip Procedure

10.1 Approved by the principal according to the Guidelines for Selection and Approval of Off-Campus Activities (see section 7);

10.2 If bus transportation is required, a copy of IS-11-FA form must be submitted to the appropriate location(s) (see flowchart);

10.3 The principal/designate to keep a completed off-campus form on file at the school

10.4 Parent (guardian) to be informed of the trip and approval obtained.

11. Category II Trips

11.1 Only [Approved Vendors](#) may be used to plan the excursion. These vendors plan the transportation, accommodations and itinerary for the excursion. Approved vendors maintain appropriate insurances as well as legislative and certification requirements. (TICO) Vendors wishing to be added to the Approved Vendors List may apply via the Boards website under [Procurement – Vendor Registration](#).

Note:

- The trip must be approved and signed by the principal and supported by the appropriate superintendent.
- Where appropriate the trip shall include cancellation insurance.
- Students, staff and volunteers must provide proof of medical coverage.
- The principal should receive confirmation from the superintendent in writing or by e-mail (this would include a signature on the IS-09-FB form).

11.2 Category II Procedure

11.2.1 The school will develop timelines for:

- planning and logistics
- informing parents of pending trip
- sharing itinerary, supervision, expectations for student behaviour, etc.
- outlining requirements regarding medical/consent forms and payment of fees or expenses

11.2.2 The principal will determine if approval is granted for the excursion according to the aforementioned procedures

11.2.3 The principal shall submit to the appropriate Superintendent, the approved off-campus category II activity.

11.2.4 In order to become a Board Sanctioned Event, a Category II Trip requires the written approval of both the school Principal and the Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being.

11.3 A Category II Trip requires the following form to be approved prior to any trip excursion is committed to (e.g. funds collected from students and/or reservations made): IS-09-FB Off-

Campus Excursions Category II & III. The following forms are required to be sent to parents/guardian/adult students and returned: IS-10-F2 Field Trip Consent Form and IS-09-F6 Off-Campus Medical Information and Consent. The IS-04-F1 Field Trip/Excursion Information for Parent/Guardian/Adult Student Form is required to be provided to the parent/guardian/adult student.

- 11.4 The most likely mode of transportation for Category II Trips is a chartered school bus or a chartered Highway Coach bus. Refer to Administrative Procedure 1590 – Transportation – Off-Campus if it is necessary to use volunteer drivers

12. Responsibilities of the School Principal or Designate After Approval Is Granted (For All Off-Campus Excursions)

- 12.1 Inform students/parent/guardian of the off-campus excursion opportunity. This would include sending appropriate forms home. Trip itinerary should be included in this information.
- 12.2 Measures must be undertaken to ensure all students, wishing to participate, have equity of access to these experiences. This may include (but not limited to):
- Providing students with 'lead time' (appropriate school based planning);
 - Minimizing cost through selection of destination;
 - Applying to WEFI for financial support;
 - School subsidizing cost;
 - Fundraising.
- 12.3 Ensure that all Off-Campus forms are received and retained by the principal, as well as a copy with the trip supervisor(s). These forms would include Medical Information and Consent forms.
- If the excursion is to a Board operated Outdoor Education facility, a copy of the appropriate form must be sent to the Coordinator of Learning Service, JK-12
 - Where an off-campus excursion requires transportation, a copy of the appropriate form must be sent to the Finance Department.
- 12.4 Ensure that parent/guardian information nights are held as outlined by these procedures (Category II). Information nights should be held at least one month prior to the event.
- 12.5 Keep a record of all off-campus trips for the school, including financial records and running totals.
- 12.6 Cheques must be made payable to the licensed travel operator or the school. It is not appropriate for cheques to be made payable to individual board employees.
- 12.7 Keep a passenger list of students and supervisors for each vehicle; one copy in the school and one copy with the trip supervisor.
- 12.8 Ensure that all procedures related to the medical needs of students (i.e. epi-pens) have been considered.
- 12.9 Ensure that all necessary and outlined procedures have been followed and all safety requirements, including those outlined in the OPHEA Safety Standards, have been met, e.g. trail hiking, canoeing, canoe tripping, Alpine (downhill) skiing, snowboarding, backpacking, waterfront activities. Boat rides and water cruises should be limited to essential transportation to a tour-related destination.
- 12.10 Note: The use of private automobiles for student transportation is subject to the minimum insurance coverage recommended by the Board. (Reference: AP 1590).

STAFFING SUPERVISION RATIOS FOR OFF-CAMPUS

CATEGORY I				CATEGORY II			
				ACTIVITIES TAKING PLACE IN A POOL OR ON A BODY OF WATER (SWIMMING, WATERPARK)			
				PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.
				*	1:8	1:10	1:15
				ALPINE (DOWNHILL) SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING			
				PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.
				N/A	1:8	1:10	1:15
ARCHERY				ARCHERY			
PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.	PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.
N/A	1:8	1:10	1:15	N/A	1:8	1:10	1:15
BACKPACKING				BACKPACKING			
PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.	PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.
N/A	1:6	1:10	1:15	N/A	*	1:10	1:15
BOARD OPERATED OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRES				CANOEING			
PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.	PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.
1:8	1:10	1:15	1:20	N/A	1:3 (S/A)	1:8	1:10
DAY TRIP TO CONSERVATION AREAS, FARMS, PARKS, ETC.				OTHER OVERNIGHT TRIPS IN ONTARIO			
PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.	PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.
1:10	1:15	1:20	1:20	N/A	1:10 (S/A)	1:15	1:15
DAY TRIP TO HISTORICAL OR COMMUNITY SITES				OVERNIGHT CAMPS (e.g. BELWOOD, PARADISE LAKE, TAWINGO)			
PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.	PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.
1:6	1:10	1:15	1:20	1:4 (S/A)	1:10	1:15	1:20
DAY TRIP OUTSIDE THE COUNTY (I.E. R.O.M.)				OVERNIGHT CAMPING			
PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.	PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.
1:5	1:10	1:15	1:20	N/A	1:8	1:15	1:15
WALKING TOURS FROM THE SCHOOL				WINTER CAMPING			
PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.	PR.	JR.	INT.	SR.
1:10	1:15	1:20	1:20	N/A	N/A	1:8	1:10

PR. = Primary (K/JK)

INT. = Intermediate (Grade 4-8)

JR. = Junior (Grade 1-3)

SR. = Senior (Grade 9-12)

N/A = Not Allowed

* = Subject to Approval (e.g. Ministry approved "learn to swim" program)

S/A = Special Approval (These trips are not normally recommended.)



Off-Campus Excursion

Category I Trips

Definition

Teacher organized trip or excursion of one day or less (i.e., Museum, Art Gallery, Pioneer Village, local historic sites). It does not include 'high-risk' activities (i.e. swimming, skiing, snowboarding).

Approval

Must be approved by the Principal.

Required Forms

- Form IS-11-FA completed and sent to finance-off-campus@wrdsb.ca if a bus is required.
- Form IS-04-F-1 completed by teacher and provided to parent/guardian
- Form IS-10-F-2 signed by parent/guardian
- Form IS-04-F-3 Parent Consent Form for **on-going** Off-Campus trips

Category II Trips

Definition

Teacher organized trip lasting more than one day within Ontario not requiring air transportation.

OR

- A day trip to the U.S.A. or outside of Ontario
- Advanced Play (i.e. CWOSSA or OFSAA) if overnight trip required
- An activity that takes place in a pool or on a body of water (e.g. swimming, canoeing, waterpark)
- Alpine (downhill) skiing, snowboarding

Approval

Must be approved by the Principal and supported by the appropriate Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being

Required Forms

- Form IS-09-FB completed and submitted (3 pages)
- Form IS-04-F-1 completed by teacher and provided to parent/guardian
- Form IS-10-F-2 signed by parent/guardian
- Form IS-09-F-6 completed and signed by parent/guardian, original with Supervisor on trip.
- Information meetings held with parents/guardians.

On-Going Off-Campus Activities

Includes all ongoing activities (e.g. non-board owned property used adjacent to the school, park trips, community library, Gr. 12 Phys. Ed., ongoing music competitions, WCSSAA league events)

Procedure:

- Requires ONGOING OFF-CAMPUS FORM IS-04-F3
- Copy of form to be sent home for parents with copy of schedule or itinerary for ongoing activities. The schedule may include the full school year.
- Form is returned to school, signed by parent or guardian and retained by staff sponsor (for minimum one year following ongoing activity)
- Driver forms (FS-19-RS4) must be completed by anyone transporting students in private vehicles.