

Toronto District School Board

Operational Procedure PR511

Title: **EXCURSIONS**

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1. RATIONALE

This Excursions Procedure (the “Procedure”) supports the implementation of the Excursions Policy (P033) and is consistent with TDSB’s commitment to the equitable inclusion of all students in Excursions, field trips and educational extra-curricular activities.

2. OBJECTIVE

To establish processes and requirements for carrying out safe and inclusive Excursions in accordance with the Excursions Policy (P033).

3. DEFINITIONS

Board refers to the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as “TDSB”.

Commercial Excursion refers to commercially organized or advertised events.

Excursion refers to any approved school or TDSB-organized educational activity involving students that takes place off school or TDSB property, which may include, but are not limited to, visiting a museum, leadership camps, end-of-year class trips, attending sports games and tournaments, overnight and weekend trips, physical education activities, interschool athletics/activities, virtual experiences. Where applicable, at a minimum, excursions and activities involved should be in accordance with the OPASSE as produced by OPHEA. If students regularly travel to a location as part of their curricular program, for example, Learn to Swim, Family Studies, Design & Technology, and Cooperative Education placements, TDSB excursion forms may not be necessary. However, Parents/Guardians must be informed of dates, location, Supervision and method of travel, for example,

walking, public transportation or private transportation. Graduation ceremonies, school proms, dances off school property and other formal and semi-formal events are not considered to be Excursions for the purpose of this document.

Excursion and Events Facilities Directory refers to a TDSB internal directory available exclusively to TDSB staff that identifies approved and not approved excursion and event facility providers.

Excursion Management Application (“EMA”) refers to the on-line TDSB excursion management application developed to streamline the generation of excursion forms and approval process for Excursions.

EMA refers to the TDSB Excursion Management Application.

GTA refers to the Greater Toronto Area

High-Care Activity refers to those types of activity(ies) that involve(s) increased risk and/or special safety considerations and may include one or more of the following (but are not limited to):

- potential for adverse weather;
- occur in or on the water (with the exception of timetabled physical education water activities, or outdoor education water activities scheduled by the Centrally Assigned Principal of Outdoor Education, or travel on large water vehicles used for public transportation);
- require special qualifications or certification for Supervision;
- take place away from easy access to first aid;
- overnight; and/or
- travel outside the Greater Toronto Area.

***Note: Higher-Risk Sports as listed in the OPASSE as set by the OPHEA.**

Inclusion, as per the Excursions Policy (P033), refers to ensuring that appropriate cultural backgrounds are considered of all students (e.g., reflecting different ways of knowing and being) when planning and carrying out excursions and excursion related activities at TDSB. Excursions and excursion related activities should be welcoming, safe, engaging, and appropriate to the age, maturity.

Informed Consent refers to the Parent’s/Guardian’s consent/permission given after all reasonable efforts have been made to fully explain the excursion or the activity and any reasonably foreseeable risks associated with that excursion or activity.

OPASSE refers to the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education.

OPHEA refers to the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association.

Out-of-Country Excursion refers to any excursions that involve travel to countries/destinations outside of Canada.

Parent/Guardian for the purpose of this document, refers to a biological parent, or a person who has legally adopted a child, or is otherwise deemed by law to have

parental status, or a legal guardian, or any caregiver legally recognized as acting in the place of a parent/legal guardian, who holds decision-making responsibility over a student, **and** is on record with the school as a parent or legal guardian of a student at the school.

Program Service Provider for the purpose of this document refers to external organizations, companies and agencies that provide services, programs, activities and/or facilities that are used for Excursions or Excursion-related activities.

Student Excursion Report refers to a report generated by Trillium or EMA that lists all the students on the Excursion, their addresses, phone numbers and emergency contacts, along with any health issues in accordance with the TDSB privacy obligations. This report can be generated for a class list or a team/group list.

Student Tour refers to Commercial Excursions, lasting more than one day, involving travel and accommodation paid for by students or their Parents/Guardians.

Supervision refers to overseeing for the purpose of regulation, direction, or ensuring safety and security of excursion participants.

TDSB refers to the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the Board

Volunteer, for the purposes of this document, refers to a person who may assist in the Supervision of Excursions and physical education activities. Examples of volunteers may include instructional assistants, educational assistants, retired teachers, cooperative students, Parents/Guardians and teacher candidates. These volunteers will not be the sole supervisors of any Excursions or Excursion-related activities.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

Associate Director, Leadership, Learning and School Improvement

5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all employees, TDSB Trustees, students, occasional staff, Parents/Guardians, Program Service Providers, Volunteers, and TDSB employed or affiliated registered medical/health professionals.

6. PROCEDURES

This Procedure is divided into sections as indexed below:

Section

A. Other Considerations

A.1 Accommodation of Religious Requirements, Practices, and Observances

- A.2 Physical Education/Interschool Athletics
- A.3 Virtual Excursions
- A.4 Other Program Areas
- B. Medical Requirements
- C. Restrictions
- D. Risk/Liability
- E. Minimum Responsibilities
 - E.1 Principals
 - E.2 Teachers
 - E.3 Volunteers
 - E.4 Students
 - E.5 Parents/Guardians
 - E.6 Superintendents of Education
- F. Application and Approval
 - F.1 Excursions within Walking Distance of the School
 - F.2 Series of Scheduled Events or Class Activities
 - F.3 Unauthorized Excursions
 - F.4 Commercial Excursions, Out-of-Country Excursions, and Student Tours
- G. Supervision
 - G.1 Principles of Supervision
 - G.2 General Requirements
 - G.3 Water-based Excursions
 - G.4 Non-Athletic Related Excursions
- H. Waivers
- I. Transportation
 - I.1 Boat and Air Transportation
 - I.2 Use of Buses and Vans
 - I.3 Student Tour Companies
 - I.4 Volunteer Drivers Using Vehicles or Another Licensed Automobile
 - I.4(c) Child Seating and Restraint Systems (Car Seats, Booster Seats, Seatbelts)
 - I.4(d) Seatbelts
 - I.4(e) Student Driver Using Private Vehicle
 - I.4(f) Personal Automobile Insurance Coverage
 - I.5 Educational Staff Renting Vehicles
 - I.6 Educational Staff Using TDSB Vehicles
 - I.7 Student Identification for Transport
 - I.8 Travel in Inclement Weather
 - I.9 Transportation of Excursion-Related Equipment and Supplies
 - I.10 Public Transportation
- J. Excursion Costs
- K. Risk Management
 - K.1 Contingency Planning
 - K.2 Medical and Emergency Procedures
 - K.3 Emergency Communications

- K.4 Early Termination of Excursions
- K.5 Requirements of Program Service Providers

A. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

A.1 Accommodation of Religious Requirements, Practices, and Observances

- a) TDSB schools and workplaces should make every reasonable effort to be aware of the religious observances of their staff, students, and community when planning special meetings, examination schedules, school concerts, parent interviews, field trips, and other school events or gatherings. These considerations do not apply where it is known that none of the potential participants would observe the particular day in question.
- b) For additional information regarding Holy Days, please consult TDSB Guidelines and Procedures for the Accommodation of Religious Requirements, Practices, and Observances (pages 6 and 7).

A.2 Physical Education/Interschool Athletics/Activities

The appropriate workflow will be completed using EMA to generate the appropriate Parent/Guardian permission for the Excursion. The teacher in charge of the Excursion will follow the specific information as set out by OPHEA in the OPASSE.

A.3 Virtual Excursions

It is assumed that Virtual Excursions will meet the criteria of all other Excursions and will happen within the instructional setting of the class (classroom or on-line platform). The appropriate workflow will be completed using EMA to generate the appropriate Parent/Guardian acknowledgement for the Excursion. The principal, or designate, will approve the curriculum connected experiences, prior to the excursion taking place.

A.4 Other Program Areas

The teacher in charge of the excursion should consult appropriate curriculum and safety documents for requirements specific to other program areas.

B. MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

- a) At the beginning of the school year, schools should request that Parents/Guardians complete TDSB's medical information form provided either in electronic form/online via EMA or in hard copy (TDSB's Form 511: Medical Information for Excursions). This medical information is collected in accordance with TDSB privacy obligations and entered into Trillium and/or EMA by schools.
- b) During the same school year, it is not necessary for Parents/Guardians to complete another Form 511: Medical Information for Excursions in electronic form/online via EMA or in hard copy, except for an overnight Excursion or if there have been any changes to the student's medical information.
- c) Overnight interschool athletics within the province of Ontario do not require an additional medical information form to be completed by Parents/Guardians. Once

the medical information is entered into Trillium and/or EMA, Trillium or EMA will generate a Student Excursion Report that outlines the student's medical/health information. The generated Student Excursion Report must be generated and carried for each Excursion by the teacher in charge of the Excursion. Parents/Guardians will also have the opportunity to update medical information for their child throughout the school year by completing another Form 511: Medical Information for Excursions (or the appropriate athletics activity form) in hard copy or in electronic form using EMA.

C. RESTRICTIONS

- d) An appropriate and related program, including assessments, will be planned for all students who do not participate in the Excursion. Conversely all students participating in an Excursion will be allowed to complete any assignments or assessments missed due to the Excursion within a reasonable time after the Excursion, without penalty.
- e) The principal will ensure that a sufficient number of teachers and adult supervisors accompany students on all Excursions in accordance with the minimum Supervision ratios outlined in this document (See Section G: Supervision for more information on Supervision ratios). Efforts should be made to include adults or older students who speak the languages of some of the students, especially when newcomers to Canada are among the group (See Section G: Supervision).
- f) Schools and school staff/administration will not authorize any Excursions that do not comply with the requirements outlined in this document and the Excursions Policy (P033). School staff/administration and teachers should not initiate or become involved in Excursions, student activities or events that do not meet the requirements outlined in this document.
- g) No TDSB employee, external organization or Program Service Provider will engage in the distribution of any literature, documents or material on school/TDSB property or use any equipment or TDSB property.
- h) Staff are not to organize, promote or discuss any Excursions that do not comply with the requirements outlined in this document or that have not been formally approved by TDSB.
- i) No TDSB employee will use any forms, literature, or any documents that may indicate to the Parents/Guardians and/or the students that unapproved Excursions have been approved by TDSB
- j) Any teacher, school staff member, principal or his/her designate who becomes aware of an Excursion, activity or event that has not been formally approved by TDSB according to the requirements of this document will make every effort to inform the students involved and their Parents/Guardians of the 'not approved' status of the Excursion, activity or event.

D. RISK/LIABILITY

- a) Excursions involve risks and responsibilities different from those encountered in the classroom.

- b) TDSB's liability insurance policy protects both staff and volunteers who are working within the scope of their duties for TDSB, from third party claims. The insurer responds to lawsuits that are brought against staff or volunteers who are supervising the Excursions, school events and activities approved by the principal, the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable.

E. MINIMUM RESPONSIBILITIES

E.1 For Principals (also see Section E.6: Superintendents of Education)

- a) At the beginning of the school year, principals will ensure that:
- i. A student data verification sheet is distributed to each student. This sheet should be completed and signed by the Parents/Guardians or the adult student (age 18 years or over). Where a student of 16 or 17 has withdrawn from parental control, the student can complete and sign the student data verification sheet. Completed student data verification sheet should be returned to the school and the changes should be entered into Trillium.
 - ii. The completed and signed Form 511: Medical Information for Excursions outlining the student's medical/health information and condition, if any and authorizing the teacher in charge of the Excursion to seek and obtain medical care, if necessary, for the student, has been obtained from the Parents/Guardians. The Parents/Guardians also have an option to either provide or update their child's medical/health information via EMA by completing an online form. **Principals must ensure that the student's medical information provided either electronically via EMA or in hard copy is entered into Trillium.** The entering of this information into Trillium should be a top priority for schools, as this is a health and safety issue.
- b) The student data verification sheet and Form 511: Medical Information for Excursions should be kept and filed (hardcopies) or stored in electronic format.
- c) The principal will make the decision to approve or not approve any Excursion and/or participants, including those requiring additional approval from the Superintendents of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable. External waivers or releases from external organizations or Program Service Providers must be acceptable to the TDSB Legal Services and/or Risk Management Department(s) and approved by the Superintendent of Education and Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable (See Section E.6: Superintendents of Education). Principals will ensure that school staff and teachers are **only** selecting approved excursion destinations and approved Program Service Providers found in the TDSB Excursion and Event Facilities Directory.
- d) For those Excursions that require the additional approval of the Superintendent of Education, at least one (1) month prior to the Excursion, the principal will submit, as required, documentation necessary for the Superintendent of Education's approval via EMA.

- e) **For overnight Excursions outside of Ontario**, Request for Excursion Approval by the Superintendent of Education (and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable) must be submitted at least three (3) months in advance, and for **Out-of-Country Excursions**, Request for Excursion Approval by the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education must be submitted at least six (6) months in advance. In order to plan for the necessary approval(s), for those Excursions that require the additional approval, school staff and teachers should draft their Excursion proposal and receive the principal approval first, prior to submitting a formal request for approval to the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable.
- f) The principal or his/her designate identified to the teachers will be available by telephone, cellular telephone, or other wireless means of communication to teachers in charge of the Excursion in case an emergency arises at any time during the Excursion. The principal will keep their mobile phone on them at all times during the Excursion. The phone number (the principal mobile) or contact information for the principal or his/her designate should be kept with the teacher in charge during the Excursion. The Excursion itinerary and phone number(s) for school staff while on the Excursion should be available to the principal and school office during the Excursion.
- g) In accordance with the TDSB Restrictions on Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use Policy (P095), all persons attending Excursions are prohibited from being in the possession of, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs (including cannabis) while on TDSB premises or while engaging in TDSB related activities and Excursions. Personal time, such as sightseeing, shopping or other forms of personal entertainment, including the involvement of alcohol or drugs, for staff and volunteers participating in an excursion are not permitted. Family, friends, pets or students from other boards are also not permitted to participate in an excursion.
- h) The principal will designate at least one (1) certified teacher from the school as the teacher in charge of the Excursion. The principal should not designate an occasional teacher as teacher in charge of the Excursion unless the occasional teacher is a long-term occasional teacher, who, in the judgment of the principal, has sufficient knowledge about the students and the nature and activity of the Excursion.
- i) The principal will ensure that a sufficient number of teachers and adult supervisors accompany students on all Excursions, in accordance with the minimum Supervision ratios outlined in this document. Efforts should be made to include adults or older students who speak the languages of some of the students, especially when newcomers to Canada are among the group (See Sections G.2: Supervision, paragraphs (f) and (p) for minimum Supervision ratios.)
- j) The principal will make every effort to ensure that a completed and signed (either online via EMA or in hard copy) Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion (or appropriate athletics form) is obtained for each student participating in an Excursion.

- k) Once the Excursion has been approved by TDSB, the principal and the teacher(s) in charge of the Excursion should consider holding Parent/Guardian information sessions, except for overnight Excursions where it is mandatory, are planned, to outline the educational purpose, explain risks, address any concerns and answer any questions.
- l) The principal should ensure that all excursion supervisors are aware of relevant medical concerns for all excursion participants.
- m) The principal should ensure that the Excursions reflect the Board's commitments to inclusion and equity and do not limit any students, for example, due to accessibility or financial constraints.
- n) All Volunteers, including volunteer drivers should be approved by the principal prior to the commencement of the Excursion.
- o) The principal will make every effort to inform the Volunteers about their responsibilities and about requirements for insurance as outlined in this document (See Section E.3: For Volunteers). The principal will request that all Volunteers sign a TDSB approved waiver as well as have proof of police background check to participate in an Excursion prior to the commencement of the Excursion.
- p) If the Excursion involves the use of volunteer drivers, these volunteer drivers are required to complete and sign Form 511F: Principal Authorization for Volunteer Drivers. The principal will make the decision to approve or not approve this form/volunteer driver. Principal Authorization for Volunteer Drivers to authorize volunteer drivers and their private vehicles for transportation of students on Excursions. Volunteer drivers should be used in limited situations.
 - i. If the Excursion involves the use of volunteer drivers, the principal should ensure that Form 511: Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion (or appropriate athletics form) includes specific information about the volunteer drivers and the vehicles being used, and that every effort is made to obtain consent from Parents/Guardians for each Excursion for students to travel in specified private vehicles with specific volunteer drivers. The requirements for volunteer drivers include a valid (unrestricted) Ontario Class G driver's license, a 3-year uncertified driver's record, personal automobile insurance coverage, and a vehicle that is in good working condition. Volunteer drivers must be over 25 years old and show proof of liability insurance on the vehicle of at least \$2,000,000. Every occupant of the vehicle must have appropriate seating and restraints (See Section I.4: Transportation, paragraph (c): Child Seating and Restraint Systems (Car Seats, Booster Seats, Seatbelts). Volunteer drivers may have no more than four 4/7 occupants, including driver, and no pets, in any vehicle. Passenger vans, for example, that could transport 10 or more occupants, are not permitted.
 - ii. Volunteer drivers should not drive themselves or other students to any activity outside of the Excursion.
- q) The principal will ensure that contingency planning is part of every Excursion. A formal contingency plan is part of every High-Care Activity or overnight Excursion

(except Excursions to TDSB Outdoor Education schools scheduled by the Centrally Assigned Principal of Outdoor Education, and overnight interschool athletics Excursions) and must be approved by the appropriate Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable.

- r) Wherever possible, supervisors on an Excursion must carry cellphones and/or two-way radios. Where cellphones and/or two-way radios are the property of the school or TDSB, the principal will make such items available to supervisors on an Excursion. Supervisors must ensure that cellphones and/or two-way radios are in good working condition, and that any batteries are fully charged prior to the Excursion.
- s) During the Excursion preparations, the principal will consider:
 - i. if a student has a serious medical/health condition;
 - ii. if the excursion destination is compatible for all students;
 - iii. preparations for student abilities, such as swim tests, have been completed;
 - iv. if the administration of medication is too complicated;
 - v. if a student has engaged in serious misconduct, including breach of the Board Code of Conduct (PR585), the school's Code of Behaviour, the Code of Behaviour for Athletes (for interschool athletics), and other applicable TDSB policies and procedures to determine whether a student participates in an Excursion.
- t) The principal will ensure that one copy of all appropriate approved forms (e.g., all completed and signed Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion; for interschool athletics, the appropriate athletics forms, including the approved team lists; for physical education class Excursions, the appropriate completed forms; and other forms pertinent to the Excursion) are on file until at least the end of June of the current school year following the school year in which the Excursion takes place.

E.2. For Teachers

- a) The teachers participating in an Excursion must be familiar with the content of the Excursions Policy (P033), this procedure and any associated documents and forms.
- b) The teacher will ensure that each Excursion has an educational purpose with curricular relevance that is clearly identified to the students and their Parents/Guardians.
- c) The teacher will ensure each Excursion is equitable and inclusive. For excursions with high costs per student and/or involving 15 or fewer students out of a pool of students of 20 or more, a teacher must provide an explanation addressing the student participation.
- d) The teacher must complete and submit to the principal via EMA all excursion request(s)/form(s) that require approval by the principal and/or approval by the Superintendent of Education at least one (1) month prior to the scheduled Excursion. Note: In order to plan for the approval, for those Excursions that require

the additional approval, teachers must draft their Excursion proposal and receive the principal approval of the Excursion proposal prior to submitting a formal request for approval to the principal and/or the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable. Where applicable, teachers should select approved excursion destinations found in the TDSB Excursion and Event Facilities Directory. No communication to Parents/Guardians should take place unless approval is first obtained.

- e) All external waivers, releases, acknowledgements, booking or registration forms and other documents/forms provided by Program Service Providers must be approved by TDSB Legal Services and/or Risk Management Department and by the Superintendent of Education.
- f) In accordance with Ontario *Travel Industry Act*, 2002 and Regulation 26/05, overnight Excursions not related to a competition or involving a camp, camping or out tripping, must be arranged through TDSB approved travel agent(s) (retailers) and travel wholesalers (for example, tour operators) registered with the Travel Industry Council of Ontario ("TICO").
- g) Teachers must use only approved excursion vendors in the Excursion and Event Facilities Directory. A Principal and, if required, a Superintendent could make an exception.
- h) The teacher in charge of the Excursion will ensure that contingency planning is part of every Excursion, especially of every High-Care Activity or overnight Excursion (except Excursions to TDSB Outdoor Education schools scheduled by the Centrally Assigned Principal of Outdoor Education, and overnight interschool athletics Excursions) and must be approved by the principal and the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable. Except for tour operator / commercial tours, the teacher must be familiar and have attended the excursion destination previously, for example, for a play, they must have attended that theatre.
 - i. The teacher in charge of the Excursion will ensure, wherever possible, that supervisors on an Excursion will carry copies of the emergency procedures and student information as generated by the Trillium student excursion report or EMA.
 - ii. The teacher in charge of the Excursion will inform the principal of alternate plans for Supervision in case one or more supervisors are unable to attend the Excursion.
 - iii. Only once approval has been obtained, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will make every effort to inform students and their Parents/Guardians, of details of the Excursion, including costs, deposits, refunds, non-refundable costs, behavioural expectations, and any risks associated with the Excursion through either Form 511: Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion or online via EMA.
 - iv. The teacher in charge of the Excursion, in consultation with the principal, should consider holding Parent/Guardian information sessions when

overnight Excursions are planned by the school, in order to outline the educational purpose, explain risks, and answer any questions.

- v. In exceptional circumstances, Excursion dates and times may change. The teacher will make every effort to inform students and their Parents/Guardians of these changes.
- i) The teacher in charge of the Excursion will make every effort to inform Parents/Guardians in writing through either Form 511: Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion (or the appropriate athletics form) or online via EMA, of the names of any volunteer drivers participating in the Excursion, and specific information about the volunteer drivers' vehicles.
- j) If the Excursion involves the use of volunteer drivers, the teacher will make every effort to ensure that consent from Parents/Guardians is obtained for each Excursion for students to travel in specified private vehicles with specific volunteer drivers (See Section E.1: For Principals, paragraph n).
- k) The teacher will make every effort to inform Parents/Guardians in writing through either Form 511: Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion (or the appropriate athletics form) or online via EMA that Parents/Guardians will be responsible for any applicable losses or costs should their child engage in misconduct, including a breach of the Board Code of Conduct (PR585), the school's Code of Behaviour, or the Code of Behaviour for Athletes (for interschool athletics) during the Excursion. This could include costs for transportation home or for damages resulting from their child's misconduct.
- l) Where practical, teachers will provide Parents/Guardians with a cover statement in the student's first language, or the Parent's/Guardian's first language where different, describing the contents and importance of all forms and any other written communication regarding the Excursion. If this is not practical, teachers will provide Parents/Guardians with a standard letter that indicates that the attached forms are important and should be translated.
- m) The teacher in charge of the Excursion will arrange an appropriate and related program, including any assessments, for all students who do not participate in the Excursion. Conversely, all students participating in an Excursion will be allowed to complete any assignments or assessments missed due to the Excursion, within a reasonable time after the Excursion, without penalty.
- n) The teacher in charge of the Excursion must be aware of the details of all medical and emergency care information for all excursion participants prior to any Excursion outlined in the Student Excursion Report.
- o) The teacher in charge of the Excursion must inform all supervisors of relevant medical concerns for all excursion participants and expected interventions.
- p) The teacher in charge of the Excursion must ensure that all excursion participants have the appropriate visa(s), proof of citizenship, passports, Ontario Health Card number, and out-of-country health/accident/travel insurance policy(ies), as required, for each student and staff member for all Out-of-Country Excursions. The teacher in charge of the Excursion will check the Government of Canada Travel

Advice and Advisories website (travel.gc.ca) for specific travel advice for the destination.

- q) For the Excursion purposes, in particular for Excursions outside of Ontario or Out-of-Country Excursions, where a student is subject to a custody order, the consent of both Parents is recommended if there is joint custody. Sometimes both Parents have custody, but they disagree with each other on the child's educational matters. In that case, it is advisable for the school to ask both Parents to reach an agreement first as the school cannot follow the Parents' conflicting directions/instructions.
- r) The teacher in charge of the Excursion will arrange and supervise all aspects of transportation required for the Excursion using TDSB approved vendors, including specialized transportation, when appropriate, for students with special needs.
- s) The teacher in charge of the Excursion will submit, via EMA, to the principal one copy of all appropriate approved forms (e.g. all completed and signed Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion; for interschool athletics, the appropriate athletics forms, including the approved team lists; for physical education class Excursions, the appropriate completed forms; and other forms pertinent to the Excursion) to be kept on file until at least the end of June of the current school year following the school year in which the Excursion takes place. In the case of a TDSB-organized Excursion, centrally assigned staff will assume the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the Excursion, as approved by the department's immediate supervisor (with the exception of interschool athletics meets/games/championships where teachers assume their normal roles).
- t) The teacher in charge of the Excursion must carry the Student Excursion Report on every Excursion.

E.3. For Volunteers

- a) Volunteers will have signed a waiver prior to the excursion.
- b) Volunteers will adhere to all applicable TDSB policies, procedures, guidelines, protocols and practices, and will work under the Supervision of the principal and teachers from the school or under the central department staff for the duration of all Excursions.
- c) Volunteers will adhere to all applicable TDSB policies and procedures relating to volunteers, including police reference checks and/or vulnerable sector screening (See TDSB Employee Protocol (SR23) regarding police reference checks ((Volunteers section) at <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/Elementary/docs/SupportingYou/SR23.pdf>). Volunteers who accompany students on an overnight or multi-day Excursion for the purpose of assistance with Supervision must have a police reference check and/or vulnerable sector screening. Whenever possible, the principal should maintain a list of "approved" volunteers for Excursion purposes.
- d) Volunteers who agree to transport students in private vehicles for an Excursion are required to complete a Form 511F: Principal Authorization for Volunteer Drivers.

The principal will make the decision to authorize or not authorize the volunteer driver and vehicle.

- e) Volunteer drivers must have the automobile liability insurance, with a minimum limit of a \$2,000,000 coverage and history to transport students for the Excursion (See Section E.1: For Principals, paragraph n).

E.4 For Students

- a) Teachers will review the information about students' responsibilities on Excursions with students at the beginning of the school year. For interschool athletics, students will also receive a copy of the Code of Behaviour for Athletes found in the respective constitutions.

Students will adhere to the TDSB Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051), the Board Code of Conduct (PR585), the school's Code of Behaviour, and other applicable TDSB policies and procedures; for interschool athletics, in addition to the above, the Code of Behaviour for Athletes, for the duration of all Excursions. Students who fail to adhere to the TDSB Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051), the Board Code of Conduct (PR585), the school's Code of Behaviour, the Code of Behaviour for Athletes (for interschool athletics) and other applicable TDSB policies and procedures, while on Excursions, will be subject to the same consequences as if the students were in attendance at school during regular school hours.

- b) While on Excursions, and while travelling to and from Excursions, students will continue to be responsible for their conduct. Students will comply with their obligations under section 23 of Regulation 298 of the *Education Act*, including the following:
- exercise self-discipline;
 - accept such discipline as would be exercised by a kind, firm, and judicious parent;
 - be courteous and demonstrate inclusiveness and equity toward fellow students;
 - be obedient and courteous to the principal and teachers; and
 - show respect for school property.
- c) Students must adhere to the TDSB Restrictions on Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use Policy (P095) that prohibits smoking, vaping, use of alcohol, and the non-medical use of drugs at all school activities and Excursions whether they take place inside school or off school property.
- d) Students participating in Excursions are expected to be prepared for the Excursion and adhere to Excursion expectations.
- e) Students participating in Excursions will follow the directions of teachers in charge of Excursion and other supervisors during the Excursion.

- f) Students participating in Excursions are expected to complete, without penalty, any assignments and assessments missed in any subject due to the Excursion, within a reasonable time after the Excursion, as determined by the student's teachers.

E.5. For Parents/Guardians

- a) Parents/Guardians of students under the age of 18 who wish their child to participate in an Excursion are required to provide permission for each Excursion by completing Form 511: Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion (or the appropriate athletics form) either in hard copy or online via EMA. Students aged 18 and over may complete Form 511: Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion (or the appropriate athletics form) on their own behalf; however, it is strongly recommended that the Parents/Guardians of such students also approve the Excursion.
- b) Form 511: Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion (or the appropriate athletics form) will contain information about the nature and purpose of the Excursion, any special risks or unusual activities, locations, dates and/or times, supervision, transportation arrangements, including mode of transport, use of volunteer drivers, costs, special clothing or equipment required, lunch or other food requirements, and any other relevant information that could have some bearing on whether the Parents/Guardians (or students aged 18 and over) would give or withhold their permission, need to update relevant medical or emergency information, and/or purchase student accident insurance..
- c) Every effort will be made to advise Parents/Guardians of any volunteer drivers participating in the Excursion and to provide them with specific information about the volunteer drivers' vehicles. Every effort will be made to obtain written Informed Consent from the Parents/Guardians in order for the student to ride with a specific volunteer driver.
- d) Parents/Guardians (or the student, where the student is aged 18 or over) who wish their child to participate in an Excursion are required to indicate if there is any medical/health reason why their child is not able to participate in the Excursion, or that may lead them to require special attention during the Excursion.
- e) At the beginning of the year, Parents/Guardians will complete another Form 511: Medical Information for Excursions authorizing the teacher in charge of the Excursion to seek and obtain medical care for the student, if necessary. Overnight interschool athletics within the province may not require an additional Form 511: Medical Information to be completed. The student's medical information will be requested annually by the school, and Parents/Guardians are expected to provide the school with any relevant information or changes throughout the school year.
- f) Parents/Guardians are expected to ensure that their child is prepared appropriately for the Excursion (e.g., bringing their own lunches and/or other times (if applicable), wear appropriate clothes, etc.)

- g) Parents/Guardian are responsible for any applicable losses or costs should their child engage in misconduct, including a breach of the TDSB Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051), the Board Code of Conduct (PR585), the school's Code of Behaviour, the Code of Behaviour for Athletes (for interschool athletics) and other applicable TDSB policies and procedures. This could include lost deposit fees, costs for transportation home, or for damages resulting from misconduct.
- h) Parents/Guardians are responsible for the purchase of voluntary student accident insurance if necessary, and where required, mandatory travel insurance that includes cancellation coverage for school labour action.

E.6 For Superintendents of Education

- a) The Superintendent of Education should make the decision to approve or not approve the following types of Excursions:
 - i. Excursions beyond the City of Toronto and the GTA and out of province;
 - ii. High-Care Activities and those types of activities that involve increased risk and/or special safety considerations.
 - iii. Overnight Excursions (not including Excursions to TDSB Outdoor Education schools scheduled by the Centrally Assigned Principal of Outdoor Education or overnight Excursions for Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations ("OFSAA") secondary school athletics competitions which will be approved on masse);
 - iv. Excursions involving activities not listed in curricular and related safety documents;
 - v. Excursions on days not identified as instructional days on the approved school year calendar or in the summer;
 - vi. Excursions where Program Service Providers require the Parent/Guardian or the student to sign the Program Service Provider's waiver or release forms. Excursion forms for the Superintendent of Education's approval should be submitted via EMA in accordance with the timelines set out in Sections E.1: For Principals, paragraph e) and E.2: For Teachers, paragraph d).
- b) The department's immediate supervisor/coordinator, the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable will make the decision to approve or not approve TDSB-initiated activities, including interschool athletics events sanctioned by TDSB, and Excursions to TDSB Outdoor Education schools scheduled by the Centrally Assigned Principal of Outdoor Education, and Excursions organized by other Centrally Assigned Coordinators.

F. APPLICATION AND APPROVAL

- a) The permission from the Parents/Guardians should be obtained for all Excursions (See Section E.5: For Parents, paragraph a). Where permission from

Parents/Guardians cannot be obtained for any reason, the student will be excluded from the Excursion unless the principal, having regard to all the circumstances, determines that it is appropriate to allow the student to participate, has verbal permission from the Parent/Guardian, and the activity is not a High-Care Activity, an Out-of-County Excursion and an Excursion outside the GTA.

- b) The principal will make the decision to approve or not approve an Excursion and participants, including those requiring additional approval from Superintendents of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable. The principal may wish to consult the Superintendent of Education, the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable or Centrally Assigned Coordinators before making a final decision or determination.
- c) Approval for TDSB-initiated activities and Excursions, including interschool athletics events sanctioned by TDSB, Excursions to TDSB Outdoor Education schools scheduled by the Centrally Assigned Principal of Outdoor Education, and Excursions organized by other Centrally Assigned Coordinators should meet the requirements of this document, the Excursions Policy (P033), except that the Superintendent of Education's approval comes from the department's immediate supervisor. For these Excursions (with the exception of the interschool athletics games/tournaments/events), the responsibilities of the teachers in charge of the Excursion are assumed by the centrally assigned coordinators approved by the appropriate Superintendent of Education.
- d) If the school requires exception to the approval timelines for Excursions the exceptions to these timelines will be considered on an individual basis at the Superintendent of Education's discretion.
- e) No communication or monies will be collected from the Parents/Guardians or students and paid to Program Service Providers prior to the full approval of the Excursion by the principal and/or Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable. For Student Tours, no monies will be paid to tour operators until all necessary approvals of the Excursions have been obtained.
- f) High-Care Activities, and other activities not specifically listed in the curriculum or related safety documents, will be submitted to the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable for approval prior to the school participation in High-Care Activities, and other activities not specifically listed in the curriculum or related safety documents.
- g) Any Excursion or activity that is not approved by the principal as part of the school program will not be promoted or organized during school hours or in association whatsoever with the school or TDSB. The teachers will not initiate or become involved in Excursions or activities that have not received the requisite approvals. Excursions organized by TDSB will comply with the same standards of curricular relevance to particular students' individual programs as those Excursions organized by the school. Where applicable, principals and teachers are strongly encouraged to select approved excursion destinations found in the TDSB Excursion and Event Facilities Directory.

F. 1 Excursions within Walking Distance of the School

- h) Principals have the option of using the: Form 511H: Walking Excursion Form – Immediate Community, to cover non-high-care curricular activities in instructional time within walking distance of the school. Appropriate supervision will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the principal. Where possible, the teacher in charge of the Excursion within walking distance of the school and principal will notify Parents/Guardians of the activity, location, date, and time through newsletters, Web sites, or notes in school planners/agendas.

F.2 Series of Scheduled Events or Class Activities within the GTA

- a) Where the Excursion involves a series of related or repeated events or activities to the same destination or for the same purpose, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will prepare a schedule of activities and obtain a single permission from Parents/Guardians for all related or repeated events or activities of the Excursion.

F.3 Unauthorized Excursions

- a) Certain excursion activities will not be approved, as they are deemed to be unsafe because of high or multiple risk factors. Examples of such activities include but are not limited to: white water canoeing; white water rafting; parasailing; parachuting; gliding; hang gliding; bungee jumping; swimming parties at private or non-regulated pools, rivers, or lakes; and hot-air balloon rides.

F. 4 Commercial Excursions, Out-of-Country Excursions, and Student Tours

- a) For any Commercial Excursions, Out-of-Country Excursions, or Student Tours, the teacher in charge of the Commercial Excursion, Out-of-Country Excursion or Student Tour will complete and submit all requests for approval via EMA at least six (6) months prior to the Excursion.
- b) All Out-of-Country Excursions will require additional approval from the Executive Superintendent of Education. The principal and the teacher in charge of the Excursion will check the Government of Canada Travel Advice and Advisories website (travel.gc.ca) for specific travel advice for the destination.
- c) The teacher in charge of the Commercial Excursion, Out-of-Country Excursion or Student Tour_ will report any changes to the excursion plan, including the time or point of departure, destination, or addresses, to the principals and/or the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable, as early as possible, in advance of the Excursion. Teachers should be aware that the Commercial Excursion operator has ultimate responsibility and decision making, including changes to the excursion plan.

- d) Commercial Excursions, Out-of-Country Excursions and Student Tours will be arranged through a TDSB approved travel agent or tour operator duly registered under the Ontario *Travel Industry Act, 2002*.
- e) The teacher in charge of the Commercial Excursion, Out-of-Country Excursion or Student Tour will confirm that the travel agent or travel wholesaler is duly registered under the Ontario *Travel Industry Act, 2002* (Refer to the TDSB Excursion and Event Facilities Directory which contains a listing of all approved tour operators). All travel agents must possess a license issued by the Travel Industry Council of Ontario (TICO).
- f) Staff and students participating in a Commercial Excursion, Out-of-Country Excursion or Student Tour must be covered by an insurance package that includes the following types of insurance (where applicable):
 - i. repatriation;
 - ii. cancellation, including labour action;
 - iii. accidental health; and
 - iv. baggage.

For Commercial Excursions, the provider will include the cost of their insurance in the excursion cost.

- g) Except for unexpected health and unique unexpected family circumstances, such as a death in the family, students will not be able to leave a Commercial Excursion during the excursion or to separately join or leave an excursion once underway, for example, a student may want to take separate transportation to meet their family who is on vacation or leave a vacation destination to join the school excursion. Any additional costs for transportation and supervision will be the responsibility of the student and may be covered under the travel insurance.
- h) Inviting or use of family members or friends as volunteers, or pets by staff, is not permitted. Students must be enrolled at the school at the time of excursion, to participate.
- i) Free time during an excursion is not recommended.
- j) Supervision ratios outlined in this Procedure should be followed on Commercial Excursions. Excess supervision and “free time” for supervisors should be avoided.
- k) When communicating the cost to parents/guardians, the cost of supervision/chaperones should be identified and communicated separately.
- l) Destinations involving beaches and swimming are to be avoided.
- m) Excursions that are initiated for a club performance, competition or game match and have a tour itinerary included, should be using a Commercial Excursion provider
- n) All excursion contracts with tour operators must contain the following clause:
“Despite any other agreement, oral or written between the parties, the agent/tour operator will fully refund within 30 days all monies paid for hotel, flight, transportation, deposits, or other services if the principal of the school notifies the

agent/tour operator that, in the opinion of Toronto District School Board, it is unsafe for the trip to proceed unless other instructions are obtained from the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable, in which case the principal will make the students and their Parents/Guardians aware in writing in the Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion form or online via EMA of the travel agency's or travel wholesaler's policy regarding refunds (See the TDSB Excursion and Event Facilities Directory, which contains a listing of tour operators approved by TDSB and their approved agreements).

- o) In the case where the deposit is non-refundable, Parents/Guardians must agree that TDSB is not liable for the loss of deposit. All cheques for payment of students' travel costs should be made payable directly to the travel agency or travel wholesaler. Cheques should not be made payable to the teacher, the school, or TDSB.

G. SUPERVISION

G.1 Principles of Supervision

- a) All activities, facilities, and equipment have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become.
- b) Supervisors should be aware of, and incorporate, the three categories of supervision set out in the OPASSE as set by the OPHEA, including:
 - i. **Constant visual:** The supervisor is physically present, watching a single activity.
 - ii. **On-site/In-sight:** The supervisor is present, but not necessarily constantly viewing a single activity.
 - iii. **In-the-area:** The supervisor may be in one area while activity is taking place in another area nearby.
- c) Supervisors of athletics activities will adhere to the designated level of Supervision as stipulated in the OPASSE.
- d) Supervisors should exercise their discretion in determining the appropriate level of during an Excursion, having regard to the following factors, among others:
 - i. the risk level of the activity;
 - ii. nature of the destination and/or travel;
 - iii. safety gear;
 - iv. the participants' special needs, skill level and abilities; competence and capacity;
 - v. the participants' ages, maturity and experiences.
- e) Additional Supervision may be advisable where a student's exceptionality warrants.

- f) The Supervisor will make students aware of the rules and safety considerations of any activities engaged in during the Excursions. Rules may be modified to suit the age, physical abilities and exceptionalities of the students, but once made, they will be strictly enforced. Students participating in the activities are expected to follow the rules for all activities, games, camps and events.
- g) Where appropriate, students and supervisors will receive safety briefings regarding the use of emergency gear and emergency procedures in advance of the Excursion.
- h) The supervisor will be vigilant to prevent students from pressuring each other into trying skills or activities for which they are not ready and/or not able to perform.

G.2 General Requirements

- a) To assist in excursion planning, excursion destinations must be selected from the TDSB Excursion and Event Facility Directory. Any activity or Excursion not listed in the Directory requires the approval of the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable.
- b) When supervising students on Excursions, teachers and other school administration must act as reasonably careful or prudent parents (the common-law standard of care) in these circumstances. In monitoring Excursions, TDSB, its staff, volunteers, authorized agents and representatives or any person permitted to provide Excursions will comply with all statutory duties, including the duty to provide instruction and adequate accommodation for students, and ensure that every activity is conducted in accordance with the *Education Act* and related regulations, *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter M.56, the *Personal Health Information Protection Act*, 2004, S.O. 2004, Chapter 3, Schedule A, the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, S.O. 2017, Chapter 14, Sched.1 and other applicable legislation in the province of Ontario as well as TDSB policies and procedures, as may be amended from time to time.
- c) In approving and supervising the Excursions, principals will comply with their statutory duties, including the duty to maintain proper order and discipline in the school, give attention to the health, safety and comfort of the students, supervise instruction in the school, provide for the Supervision of any school activity authorized by TDSB, and report promptly any neglect of duty or infraction of school rules by a student to the Parents/Guardians.
- d) In planning and supervising Excursions, teachers will comply with their statutory duties, including the duty to teach diligently and faithfully the classes or subjects assigned to the teacher by the principal; encourage students in the pursuit of learning; maintain proper order and discipline in the classroom and on the school ground; be responsible for effective instruction, training, and evaluation; ensure that all reasonable safety procedures are carried out; and co-operate with the principal and other teachers to establish and maintain consistent disciplinary practices.

- e) School staff and principals should provide support to students to be able to participate in all Excursions, including activities requiring skills training, such as swimming. For students unable to attend certain Excursions or attend in a limited capacity, alternative activities should be planned, including assessments in accordance with the policies and practices described in the Ontario Ministry of Education policy documents: *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – First Edition (Covering Grades 1 to 12), 2010* and *Growing Success – The Kindergarten Addendum: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2016*.
- f) Excursion volunteers will adhere to the TDSB policies, procedures and guidelines relating to volunteers, including obtaining a police reference check. Volunteers who accompany students on an Excursion for the purpose of assistance with Supervision must have a valid police reference check (See Section E.3: Volunteers, paragraph b).
- g) All overnight Excursions will be supervised by at least two adults, representing the gender of the participating students, including at least one teacher from the school. For Excursions that include students from more than one school, and if it is not practical to have a teacher from each school, one teacher will be designated responsible.
- h) The principal and the teacher in charge of the Excursion will ensure that all precautions for the safety, comfort and supervision of participating students are taken, including an overnight safety plan.
- i) The principal and the teacher in charge of the Excursion will ensure that the following minimum supervision ratios are met for each excursion:

Minimum Supervision Ratios (for a maximum group size of 30 students)		
Grade Levels	Day Excursions	Overnight Excursions
JK–K	Three adult supervisors per group	Not recommended
1–3	Two adult supervisors per group	Not recommended for Grade 1 (Special approval of the Superintendent of Education required for Grades 2 or 3; If approved, four adult supervisors per group)
4–8	Two adult supervisors per group	Two adult supervisors per group
9–12	One adult supervisor per group	Two adult supervisors per group

- j) The Superintendent of Education may grant other exceptions to the supervision ratios and standards at the Superintendent of Education’s discretion.
- k) Relevant considerations for the principal or the Superintendent of Education in exercising his or her discretion to increase Supervision ratios, in the chart above

or in the OPASSE as set by the OPHEA, may depend on the following factors (the list is not limited to the below factors):

- i. the nature of certain destinations;
- ii. the nature of the Excursion or activity;
- iii. whether accommodations are required for students with special needs and exceptionalities who will be participating in the Excursion or activity. The accommodations are to be considered so that excursion participants are not disadvantaged or discriminated against during Excursions on the basis of the prohibited grounds of discrimination, as identified in the *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 32 and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11 and their respective regulations (See TDSB Accessibility Policy (P069).
- iv. the competence and capacity of the students involved;
- v. the age of the students;
- vi. whether athletic teams are involved;
- vii. whether Excursions are TDSB initiated and/or involve students from different schools, e.g., Student Environmental Network or a music camp;
- viii. whether Excursions to TDSB Outdoor Education Day Centres where additional Supervision is provided;
- ix. whether the activities require supervisors to have specific training and/or certification in order to supervise and instruct the Excursion or activity. Examples of these Excursions include but are not limited to activities such as canoeing, kayaking, sailing, swimming, Dragonboat racing, wall-ascending lines, bouldering, challenge courses climbing, skiing, snow tubing, camping, horseback riding, and rock climbing (See the OPESG as set by the OPHEA for complete listings and certification requirements).

G.3 Excursions Involving Water-Based Activities

- a) When attending any water-based Excursions, all students must pass the required swim tests as set out by the Ontario Physical Health Education Association (OPHEA) in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards Education (OPASSE).
- b) All Excursions involving water-based activities will only be approved after the principal has reviewed documentation showing that only those students who passed the appropriate test(s) will be participating in water-based activities during the Excursion.
- c) **First Pre-Excursion Swim Test.** All students participating in a pre-Excursion swim test will be given the results of their pre-Excursion swim test. All Parents/Guardians of children taking part in future Excursions that involve swimming, canoeing/kayaking or any other water-based activities will receive their child's/children's pre-Excursion swim test results prior to the Excursion.

Parents/Guardians will know that if their child is going on an Excursion involving water-based activities and if their child has passed a pre-Excursion swim test.

- d) **Second Swim Test.** All students participating in water-based activities must pass a second swim test at a third-party facility. It will be supervised by camp lifeguards and TDSB teachers as per Ontario Camp Association (OCA) guidelines. If students fail the second swim test, they will not participate in any water-based activities during the Excursion. Any student who has failed their second swim test will not be allowed to participate in any water-based activities and will be provided with alternative land-based activities.
- e) All students involved in water-based activities must be wearing a personal floatation device at all times outside designated, supervised, swim areas; no exceptions will be made.
- f) In accordance with the OPHEA requirements, principals and teachers in charge of the Excursion will ensure that the correct number of lifeguards (National Lifeguard Certified) will be present when students are in the water during the Excursion.
- g) All supervisory staff overseeing water-based activities must have current certifications as per Ontario Teachers Aquatic Standard (OTAS). A copy of certification will be provided to the principal prior to the Excursion.

G.4 Non-Athletic Related Excursions

- a) For non-athletic activities, the principal will ensure that a sufficient number of teachers and adult supervisors accompany students on all Excursions, in accordance with the minimum supervision ratios outlined in this document. (See Section G.2: General Requirements, paragraph j) for minimum Supervision ratios.)
- b) Where the Excursion involves physical education or interschool athletics, the minimum supervision ratios for the specific activity must be obtained from the OPASSE as set by the OPHEA, and the lowest ratio must be adhered to.
- c) The following individuals may be designated by the principal as additional supervisors on an Excursion: principals, vice-principals, teachers, education staff, Parent/Guardian and community volunteers (provided they are 18 years of age or over).
- d) For interschool athletics events, teachers, long-term occasional teachers, principals, and vice-principals employed by the TDSB, and retired TDSB teachers who are in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers, are eligible to coach, subject to the approval and discretion of the principal.
- e) For overnight excursion, whereby the teacher is adding a tour to the itinerary, refer to Commercial Excursions.
- f) TDSB employees who are not teachers, and individuals who are not employed by the TDSB (“community coaches”), may coach subject to the approval and discretion of the principal, provided community coaches meet criteria for coaching eligibility, are under the direct supervision of a teacher/administrator (“staff

supervisor”) who is employed by the TDSB, obtain police reference checks in accordance with the TDSB Employee Services Protocol: Police Reference Checks (SR23) and adhere to all applicable TDSB policies, procedures and guidelines

H. WAIVERS AND ADDITIONAL FORMS

- a) From time to time, Program Service Providers may require the excursion participants and/or their Parents/Guardians to complete a waiver and/or release forms prior to participating in the Excursions. Where a Program Service Provider requests that a waiver and/or release form or any other forms from a Program Service Provider be completed and signed, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will submit the forms to the Superintendent of Education, prior to the commencement of the Excursion, for his or her approval. Waivers or any other forms from Program Service Providers must be acceptable to the TDSB Legal Services and/or Risk Management Department and approved by the Superintendent of Education prior to the commencement of the Excursion. Principals will ensure that school staff and teachers in charge of the Excursion are selecting approved excursion forms and approved Program Service Providers found in the TDSB Excursion and Event Facilities Directory.

I. TRANSPORTATION (Reference to TDSB Transportation of Students Policy (P020))

- a) Acceptable means of transportation for students participating in Excursions may include:
- buses and vans owned or hired by the TDSB;
 - public transportation, including vehicles and vessels;
 - authorized, commercial, transportation provider;
 - other forms of transportation approved by the Superintendent of Education.
 - Personal automobile use of volunteer or staff drivers and privately owned vehicles should be a choice of last resort.
- b) Students may make alternate travel arrangements to and from an Excursion with approval from the teacher in charge of the Excursion and prior written permission from the Parents/Guardians.
- c) For public transportation, students should receive full safety briefings from school staff and/or authorized TDSB representatives regarding the use of emergency gear and emergency procedures prior to the Excursion or boarding.
- d) Insurance information will be obtained for vehicles used in the Excursion, regardless of the mode of transportation (i.e., commercial or volunteer).
- e) For volunteer driver’s requirements, see Section E.1: For Principals, paragraph n) and Section E.3: For Volunteers, paragraph d).

I.1 Boat and Air Transportation

- a) For public transportation, both in-country and out of country, commercial boats or ships, vessel inspections are not required. For non-public transportation boats or ships, such as one exclusively offering tours or host a school event, vessel certification is required. In Ontario, refer to the TDSB Excursion and Event Facilities Director for approved Program Service Providers. If the transportation is part of a tour, the tour operator is responsible for confirming the vessel certification and safety plans.
- b) Unless a Program Service Provider is a public transportation provider, for Excursions involving boating activities, all students will require a lifejacket.

I.2 Use of Buses and Vans

- a) The preferred method of transportation for students on Excursions is by buses or vans owned and/or hired, with operator, by the TDSB.
- b) Bus carriers should be selected from the list of pre-approved carriers prepared and issued annually by the TDSB Transportation Department.
- c) A teacher from the school or teacher in charge of the Excursion will supervise students on a bus or van during all school-organized Excursions. The principal may delegate to a team coach or other responsible adult the responsibility of Supervision of students on a bus or van.
- d) In situations where a bus or vehicle owned or hired by the TDSB is used to transport students during an Excursion, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will make and carry a list of the students, along with the Student Excursion Report, on each vehicle. Where possible, the list should include the licence/identification number of each vehicle. Where the activity is an Out-of-Country Excursion, then applicable travel insurance information (including insurers' phone number) should be carried by the teacher in charge of the Excursion.
- e) When the Excursion goes beyond the GTA if travelling by bus, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will also carry a seating plan.

I.3 Student Tour Companies

- a) Student Tour companies must be approved by the TDSB Purchasing Department and if the companies utilize their own carriers, they must meet the TDSB insurance requirements to be considered pre-approved carriers. Tour companies should be instructed to contact the TDSB Purchasing Department for the most recent TDSB insurance requirements.

I.4 Volunteer Drivers Using Vehicles or Another Licensed Automobile

- a) Volunteer drivers are individuals, authorized by the principal, who have agreed to transport students using their own or another licensed automobile that meets the requirements of the TDSB, as outlined on the Form 511F: Principal Authorization

for Volunteer Drivers (See Section E.1: For Principals, paragraph n) and Section E.3: For Volunteers, paragraph d). The teacher in charge of the Excursion is expected to ensure that these forms are completed by volunteer drivers and submitted to the principal for review.

b) **Child Seating and Restraint Systems (Car Seats, Booster Seats and Seatbelts)**

i. Child seating and restraint systems are mandatory as follows when transportation is not by public transportation:

- Child Car Seats (forward-facing) are to be used for children weighing between 9 and 18 kg (20 to 40 lbs).
- Booster Seats are to be used for children weighing from 18 to 36 kg (40 to 80 lbs), less than 145 cm (4 feet, 9 inches) tall and up to 8 years old. Booster seats must be used with both the lap and shoulder belt combination.
- Seatbelts are designed for adults and older children. *Highway Traffic Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8 allows a child to use a seatbelt alone when any one of the following occurs: (1) child turns 8 years old, or (2) child weighs 36 kg (80 lb.), or (3) child is 145 cm (4 ft. 9 in.) tall or more.

ii. Drivers can be punished for not using proper child car restraints in vehicles. The principals and drivers are responsible for ensuring passengers under age sixteen (16) are properly secured. Principals should not authorize volunteer drivers to transport students unless each student has the appropriate child seating. Where this is not possible, alternative transportation such as public transportation or school bus should be used.

iii. The Ontario government introduced Bill 73, *Highway Traffic Statute Law Amendment Act (Child and Youth Safety) 2004*, which was passed into law on December 9, 2004 and went into effect on September 1, 2005. Bill 73 requires the mandatory and proper use of child car restraints – including car seats and booster seats. In Ontario, all drivers (including visiting drivers) must ensure that children under the age of 16 occupy a seating position and wear the seatbelt assembly, and that children under the age of 8 are properly secured in the correct child car seat or booster seat according to Ontario's requirements (Ontario Ministry of Transportation website at <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/choose-car-seat.shtml>).

c) Volunteer drivers and TDSB employees who use their personal vehicles for transporting students to Excursions and school activities should advise their insurance carrier of these uses of their vehicles. Ontario legislation makes automobile insurance compulsory in the Province of Ontario. Volunteer drivers should have the current motor vehicle liability insurance coverage, with a limited on liability of at least \$1 million on any vehicle used to transport students for the Excursion (See Section E.1: For Principals, paragraph n) and Section E.3: For Volunteers, paragraph d) for more details).

- d) Ontario legislation makes the owner's insurance primary coverage in the event of an accident, in other words, the insurance carried on the vehicle responds first. If a vehicle that is not owned by TDSB is being operated by a volunteer or any other TDSB employee for approved school activities or Excursions, the TDSB non-owned automobile insurance endorsement will respond to third-party liability claims in excess of the owner's insurance limit up to a total combined limit as stated in the TDSB non-owned auto policy.
- e) There is no coverage provided by the TDSB's insurance for damage to a volunteer's or employee's vehicle while they are being operated for TDSB activities.

I.5 Educational Staff Renting Vehicles

- a) Vehicles being rented by educational staff for Excursions will be rented in the name of the TDSB and only as a last resort.
- b) The full insurance coverage offered by the rental company is to be purchased, including the motor vehicle liability, with a limited on liability of at least \$2,000,000.
- c) The driver will provide proof of a licence required to operate the specified vehicle rented.
- d) Booster Seats. Section I.4 (c) above also applies to educational staff renting vehicles.

I.6 Educational Staff Using TDSB Vehicles

- a) The driver will provide proof of a licence required to operate the specified vehicle being used and have three-year automobile accident free history.
- b) Booster Seats. Section I.4 (c) above also applies to educational staff using TDSB vehicles.

I.7 Student Identification for Transport

- a) All students are expected to carry with them identification, including home, emergency, and school telephone numbers. When travelling on public transit, students in Grades K–6 should also carry the address of the excursion venue and the correct transit stop.
- b) In situations where a bus or vehicle owned or hired by the TDSB is used to transport students during an Excursion, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will make and carry a list of the students along with the Student Excursion Report on each vehicle. Where possible, the list should include the licence/identification number of each vehicle. Where the Excursion is out-of-province or includes High-Care Activities, then applicable health information (including insurers' phone number) should also be carried.

- c) When the Excursion goes beyond the GTA if travelling by bus, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will also carry a seating plan.
- d) The principal will retain a copy of the above-mentioned lists as well as other related excursion forms in hard copy or in digital format in the school. The teacher in charge of the Excursion will also carry a copy of these lists. Finally, the supervisor of each bus or vehicle unit will carry a copy of these lists.

I.8 Travel in Inclement Weather

- a) From time to time, weather conditions may make travel hazardous, particularly on the highway.
- b) The principal has the ultimate responsibility for the safety of the students and will make a decision in these circumstances whether to proceed or not proceed with the Excursion.
- c) The school will cover any costs associated with the cancellation or delay of the Excursion.

I.9 Transportation of Excursion-Related Equipment and Supplies

- a) The transportation of Excursion-related equipment and supplies will be done in accordance with the safety requirements of the approved carrier.

I.10 Public Transportation

- a) Public transportation may be an acceptable alternative to a TDSB bus.
- b) Student groups larger than 35–40 should stagger their travel times or make alternative travel arrangements.
- c) If the student group includes students who do not have public transportation student identification cards, the teacher in charge should contact the service provider to obtain a group identification card for the Excursion, if available.
- d) When public transportation services are used, an adult supervisor will travel with all students, K–8 inclusive, to the excursion location, and return to the school. Students in Grades 7 and 8 may be dismissed from the venue, or the appropriate public transportation stop, provided prior written informed consent from their Parents/Guardians has been obtained.
- e) When public transportation services are used, students in Grades 9-12 may travel to and from the excursion venue without adult supervision provided prior written informed consent from their Parents/Guardian has been obtained.
- f) Principals will make individual assessments of the students to ensure that travel arrangements are appropriate in any given circumstance.

J. EXCURSION COSTS

- a) In accordance with principles of the Equity Policy (P037) and TDSB's commitments to equity, inclusion, fairness, diversity and acceptance, every effort will be made to ensure that excursion opportunities are communicated in multiple, accessible formats and that students are provided with equitable access to excursion opportunities.
- b) No monies for Excursions will be collected and paid to Program Service Providers before the full approval of the principal and/or approval the Superintendent of Education and the Executive Superintendent of Education, where applicable are obtained.
- c) Teachers in charge of the Excursion will inform Parents/Guardians of the cost of the Excursion and other financial arrangements in the Parent/Guardian Permission for Excursion form. For out-of-province and Out-of-Country Excursions, teachers in charge of the Excursion will also inform Parents/Guardian of detailed costs, deposits, refunds, and non-refundable costs associated with the Excursion.
- d) Principals will inform Parents/Guardians that Parents/Guardians will be responsible for any applicable losses or costs associated with their child being engaged in misconduct while on the Excursion, including damages and/or return transportation fare. Principals will also inform Parents/Guardians that Parents/Guardians will be responsible for any non-refundable deposit associated with the activity should TDSB cancel the Excursion in the interest of student safety or for any other emergency.
- e) Supervision costs may be paid by Parents/Guardians/students up to the required ratios of Supervision (See section G.2 paragraph j). Above the required ratio of supervision, additional costs will be shared by all participating staff.

K. RISK MANAGEMENT

In referencing and selecting Program Service Providers from the TDSB Excursion and Event Facilities Directory, school staff will have access to approved vendors and related risk management information.

K.1 Contingency Planning

The principal will ensure that contingency planning is part of every Excursion. This includes anticipated risks, potential emergencies, and response to these emergencies.

- a) The principal and the teacher in charge of the Excursion will ensure that an appropriate formal contingency plan is part of every High-Care Activity or overnight Excursion (except excursions to TDSB Outdoor Education schools scheduled by the Centrally Assigned Principal of Outdoor Education, and overnight interschool athletics Excursions).

- b) All excursion destinations in the Excursion and Event Facility's Directory have safety plan. Appropriate contingency plans should include the excursion destination plan as well as consider the degree of isolation of the Excursion. An appropriate contingency plan should include the recognition of potential emergencies, training and preparation, security plans for overnight accommodations, response during the emergency, and communication plans. An appropriate contingency plan should ensure that those individuals supervising the Excursion are familiar with relevant TDSB policies and procedures and other applicable policies, procedures and protocols.
- c) During an emergency, the supervisor will take care of the immediate needs of the participants involved in the incident, prevent the situation from escalating, and follow the steps below:
 - i. Assess the situation to determine if immediate medical care is required or if assistance is required.
 - ii. Account for all participants and remove participants from further danger. A supervisor will take charge of the group, provide comfort and necessary information to all involved.
 - iii. Call 911 or necessary emergency services for assistance, depending on area/location.
 - iv. Arrange for the administration of first aid or CPR as required.
 - v. Call the school emergency contact. Contingency planning should be coordinated with the school emergency coordinator.
 - vi. In life-threatening situations, call the school contingency contact after alerting emergency services.
- d) Staff member or adult supervisor should accompany injured participant to the hospital. Contact principal from hospital and update on the participant's condition.
- e) The principal will arrange a convenient meeting area for Parents/Guardians when an emergency arises, to allow for privacy, fact finding, and exchange of information.
- f) During an emergency, where possible, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will keep or arrange for an ongoing written log of events and times to be kept.

K.2 Medical and Emergency Procedures

- a) At the beginning of the school year, principals will ensure that Form 511: Medical Information for Excursions has been obtained from all Parents/Guardians, authorizing the teacher in charge of the Excursion to seek and obtain medical care, if necessary, for the student (See Section E.5 For Parents/Guardians, paragraph e) for more details).
- b) Students may attend school and school-based Excursions, even if they do not have health coverage. Principals should consider the following in terms of health coverage requirements:

- i. Individuals who were born in Canada and reside in Ontario have universal access to the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP).
 - ii. Permanent residents (formerly referred to as landed immigrants) obtain OHIP coverage beginning 90 days after entry to Canada.
 - iii. Refugee claimants who are in possession of the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Form IMM1442 (Determination of Eligibility for refugee status or Refugee Protection Claimant Document), are provided with the Federal Health Insurance Plan.
 - iv. Temporary residents such as diplomats or guest workers do not have access to health coverage. Private health insurance must be purchased in order to have medical coverage.
 - v. Where students do not have health coverage and an incident happens at school, Ontario School Boards' Insurance Exchange (OSBIE) will reimburse Parents/Guardians for ambulance costs and the first day of emergency care at a hospital. Parents/Guardians must present a paid invoice for these services to the principal. The invoice and copy of the incident report are forwarded to OSBIE.
 - vi. Visa students have private health coverage as part of their tuition fee to the TDSB.
 - vii. For families who remain in Canada after their refugee claim is rejected, or families who have been in the country without status, do not have health insurance. Private health insurance would be the only form of coverage that they can access.
- c) All students may purchase student accident insurance, provided they are covered under OHIP. Principals are advised to ensure that:
- i. a Plan of Care has been developed and shared and reviewed with staff and supervisors of the Excursion when required.
 - ii. Parents/Guardians or students aged 18 or over are advised to purchase private health care insurance if they are not covered by OHIP.
- d) For Out-of-Country Excursions, all students must purchase travel insurance, including cancellation and medical coverage. All Supervisors , except if working for the Board, must purchase travel insurance, including cancellation and medical coverage. Board staff should purchase cancellation coverage at the time of booking. will have hospital and medical insurance coverage for outside Canada during the Excursion.
- e) Teacher(s) in charge of the Excursion and adult supervisors will carry the Student Excursion Report on every Excursion.

K.3 Emergency Communications

- a) In advance of the Excursion, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will leave an itinerary of the Excursion in the school office, including contact information so that

the Principal or designate may contact the teacher in charge of the Excursion if an emergency arises.

- b) The principal or his/her designate identified to the teacher(s) in charge of the Excursion will be available by telephone, cellular telephone, or other wireless means of communication to teacher(s) in charge of the Excursion in case an emergency arises at any time during the Excursion, or if a return is delayed, or any other matters that require the principal's assistance.
- c) Wherever possible, Supervisors will carry cellphones and/or two-way radios. Where cellphones and/or two-way radios are the property of the school, the principal will make such items available to Supervisors. Supervisors must ensure that cellphones and/or two-way radios are in good working condition, and any batteries are fully charged prior to the Excursion.

K.4 Early Termination of Excursions

- a) In the event that the principal or teacher in charge of the Excursion determines that a student or students should return home prior to the end of the Excursion, the principal or teacher in charge of the Excursion will inform the Parents/Guardians and make suitable and safe arrangements for the return of the student(s).

K.5 Requirements of Program Service Providers

- a) When utilizing a Program Service Provider, the teacher in charge of the Excursion will determine that the Program Service Provider carries general liability insurance by obtaining a copy of the policy or certificate of insurance.
- b) The teacher in charge will ensure that Program Service Providers have qualified and/or certified instructors, where necessary. Specific qualification and certification requirements for certain activities are set out the OPHEA in the OPASSE.

7. EVALUATION

This procedure will be reviewed as required, but at a minimum every four (4) years after the effective date.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix A: EMA Workflow Summary
Appendix B: Emergency Procedures Checklist: Accident
Appendix C: Emergency Procedures Checklist: Missing Student
Appendix D: 511F: Volunteer Driver Form
Appendix E: 511H: Walking Excursion – Immediate Community

9. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

TDSB Policies:

- Equity Policy (P037)
- Excursions Policy (P033)
- Restrictions on Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use Policy (P095)
- Student Health Support Policy (P092)
- Transportation of Students Policy (P020)
- Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051)

TDSB Operational Procedures:

- Anaphylaxis in Schools Procedure (PR563)
- Asthma Management Procedure (PR714)
- Board Code of Conduct (PR585)
- Concussions Management Procedure (PR712)
- Diabetes Management Procedure (PR607)
- Medication Procedure (PR536)
- Transportation of Students Procedure (PR504)

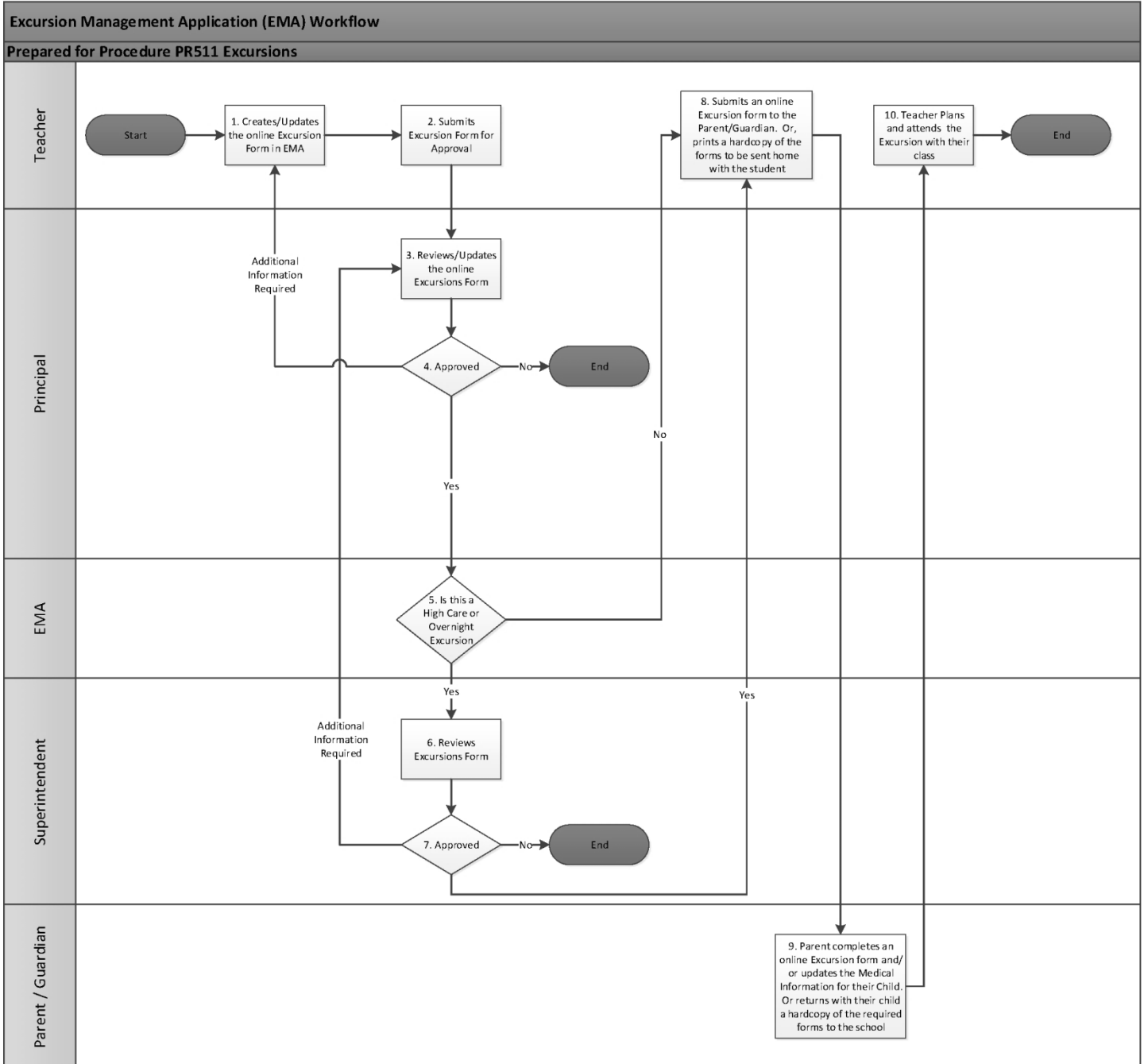
Legislative Acts, Regulations and Government Policies:

- *Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2
- *Regulation 298: Operation of Schools under Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2
- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter M.56.
- *Personal Health Information Protection Act*, 2004, S.O. 2004, Chapter 3, Schedule A.
- *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, S.O. 2017, Chapter 14, Sched.1.
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 161: Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions (Anaphylaxis, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy) in Schools (Ontario Ministry of Education).

Other Related Documents:

- Ontario Health and Physical Education Association: Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education
- Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – First Edition (Covering Grades 1 to 12), 2010 (Ontario Ministry of Education)
- Growing Success – The Kindergarten Addendum: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2016 (Ontario Ministry of Education)
- TDSB Excursion and Event Facility Directory
- TDSB Guidelines and Procedures for the Accommodation of Religious Requirements, Practices, and Observances, 2010.
- TDSB Employee Services Protocol: Police Reference Checks (SR23).

Excursion Management Application (EMA) Workflow



**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES CHECKLIST
ACCIDENT**

SEQUENCE	ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBILITY	PLANNING NOTES
1	Account for all participants. Remove participants from further danger. Provide comfort and maintain Supervision	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
2	Assess the situation. Determine if immediate medical care or assistance is required.	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
3	Call 911. Administer first aid or CPR as required. Do not move victim if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unconscious • neck or back injury • significant loss of blood 	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
4	Call school emergency contact. Review contingency plan.	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
5	Inform Parent(s)/Guardian(s).	Principal	
6	Transport injured participant(s) to medical care as quickly as possible	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
7	Send staff member or adult supervisor to hospital with injured participant(s). Contact principal from hospital with an update.	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
8	Update principal.	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
9	Keep ongoing written log of events and times when possible.	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	

*Teacher in charge of the Excursion can delegate tasks 2, 6, 7, and 9 to the supervisor(s)

Considerations in reporting an emergency:

- State name of school/site.
- State name of caller.
- Describe the nature of the problem.

- Give telephone number where emergency is.
- Describe type and extent of injury(ies).
- How many participants are injured.
- Describe the action(s) and steps taken.
- Specify needs (i.e., medical, transportation, supervision).

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES CHECKLIST
MISSING STUDENT**

SEQUENCE	ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBILITY	PLANNING NOTES
1	Inform the teacher in charge of the Excursion immediately.	Other supervisor	
2	Initiate search using only known adults. Do not leave other students unsupervised.	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
3	Inform the principal (or his/her designate) if student not found within 30 minutes of reported missing. Keep the principal informed of any new developments.	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
4	Inform local police.	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
5	Await arrival of police before arranging the return of other students to school (or residence/dormitory).	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	
6	Inform Parent/Guardian.	Principal	
7	Inform supervisory officer (e.g. Superintendent of Education).	Principal	
8	Deal with media.	Principal	
9	Other students must be returned to pre-arranged location within one hour of designated return time.	Principal	
10	Teacher in charge of the Excursion must remain to provide information when police arrive.	Teacher in charge of the Excursion	

511F: VOLUNTEER DRIVER FORM

Form 511F
May 9, 2005
Page 1 of 2

Principal Authorization for Volunteer Drivers

The collection and retention of the information requested on this form is authorized and governed by the Ontario *Education Act* and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

This will authorize _____
(Name of teacher or other volunteer driver)

to transport students participating in the following school excursion: _____

Driver Authorization

This form must be signed both by the owner of the vehicle and by the driver.

1. Declaration to be signed by the owner of the vehicle

Vehicle Information: Make/Model _____ Year _____ Licence _____

I declare that I have authorized _____ to drive my vehicle to transport students participating in the school event(s) listed on this form. She/he holds an unrestricted Class G2 or better driver's licence and is licensed to drive in Ontario, and is insured as an operator under a valid automobile liability insurance policy as required by Ontario law.

I declare that the vehicle described above is mechanically fit, there are seat belts in working condition for all passengers, and that the appropriate car/booster seats are used.

I agree to inform the school of any changes in the vehicle or driver information.

Name of owner _____ Signature _____ Date _____
(Please print)

2. Declaration to be signed by driver

I declare that I hold an unrestricted driver's Class G2 or better licence and am licensed to drive in Ontario, and that my vehicle is insured by a valid automobile liability insurance policy as required by Ontario law.

I agree to inform the school of any changes in the vehicle or driver information.

Name of driver _____ Signature _____ Date _____

3. Declaration to be signed by parent(s)/guardian(s), if driver is a student

I declare that my daughter/son has my permission to be a volunteer driver for students participating in the school excursion(s) listed on this form. I further declare that my daughter/son holds an unrestricted Class G2 or better driver's licence and is licensed to drive in Ontario, and is insured as an operator under a valid automobile liability insurance policy as required by Ontario law.

Name of parent/guardian _____ Signature _____ Date _____

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Principal Authorization

The Principal shall request to see original documents where possession of such documents is to be shown.

All "Trip Drivers," including volunteer drivers, are advised that, in order to bring into effect the Toronto District School Board's (TDSB) Excess Liability Insurance, they must:

- have a booster seat for each child under the age of 8 or between 18-36 Kg and a standing height less than 145 cm;
- use a licensed automobile that carries valid automobile third-party liability insurance as required under Ontario legislation;
- provide the TDSB with prompt written notice, with particulars, of any accident arising out of the use of a licensed automobile during an excursion on TDSB-related business;
- be aware that the TDSB's Excess Automobile Liability insurance comes into effect only after the vehicle owner's insurance has been exhausted;
- be aware that any damage to the volunteer's vehicle, the cost of any insurance deductible, or premium adjustment as the result of an accident while the vehicle is being used on Board-related business, is NOT covered by the TDSB's Excess Automobile Liability insurance;
- carry a minimum of \$1 million of third-party automobile liability insurance (as recommended by the Board).

Note: A "Trip Driver" is defined as any person authorized by the TDSB who has agreed to be a driver for a certain excursion while he/she is driving their own or another licensed automobile, to include trustees, employees, teachers, students, parents, volunteers and officials of the TDSB.

School Name _____ Date _____

Principal's Name _____

Signature _____

*For office use only		
Distribution (after final approval):	Driver _____	Principal _____

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511H: WALKING EXCURSION – IMMEDIATE COMMUNITY



Form 511H
Aug. 30, 2004
Page 1 of 1

Walking Excursion Form – Immediate Community

School: _____ Teacher: _____

Principal: _____ Principal Signature: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

From time to time, students are engaged in non-high-care curricular activities that occur off school property in the immediate community, but within walking distance of the school. Some examples of these activities are walking to the library, the local park, and the local store.

School-Specific Activities:

The principal will approve these excursions, and teacher supervision will be provided at all times.

Whenever possible, parents/guardians will be notified in advance by one or more of the following methods:

- school newsletter,
- class newsletter,
- a note in the student planner/agenda,
- the school Web site.

Please sign and return the bottom section of the page.

PERMISSION FOR WALKING EXCURSION – IMMEDIATE COMMUNITY

Student Name: _____

Teacher: _____

In signing this form, I give permission for my child, _____, to participate in those school-specific curricular activities that occur off school property in the immediate community and within walking distance of the school.

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____ (*print*)

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

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Ministry of Education Final Report Review and Assessment of Ontario School Board Policies and Procedures on Outdoor Ed/Excursions involving Water-Related Activities

Ministry of Education

Deputy Minister

Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Ministère de l'Éducation

Sous-ministre

Édifice Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2



Memorandum To: Directors of Education
Supervisory Officers of School Authorities
Executive Director, Provincial and Demonstration Schools Branch

From: Bruce Rodrigues
Deputy Minister

Date: May 1, 2018

Subject: Final Report – Review and assessment of Ontario school board policies and procedures on outdoor education/excursions involving water-related activities

I am writing to update you on the third party review of school board policies and procedures for safety during outdoor education excursions involving water-related activities. Thank you for your participation in the review. Deloitte Inc. (Deloitte) relayed that they encountered overwhelming support from you and your staff during their data collection, and that the passion and dedication of school board staff for delivering safe outdoor education opportunities to students was evident throughout the review process.

Deloitte has completed its work for the ministry and has submitted a final report. The Executive Summary of this report and a presentation on the findings and recommendations are attached. The full report will be sent to you once it has been translated by the end of May.

As you know, this review was initiated in response to the tragic death of a student during an excursion in Algonquin Park in July 2017. The purpose of the review was to determine:

- whether school boards have policies and procedures in place that meet the minimum standards for risk management during outdoor education/excursions with water-related activities; and
- how school boards monitor implementation and ensure compliance with existing policies and procedures.

.../2

The report outlines that the majority of school boards that responded to Deloitte's online survey have policies and/or procedures in place. I would like to emphasize that the ministry's expectation is for all school boards to ensure that they have outdoor education/excursion policies and/or procedures in place that meet or exceed the minimum standards laid out in the Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines managed by Ophea.

We also expect that boards are reviewing and updating these policies and/or procedures regularly. I urge you to review your existing policies and procedures in light of this report and consider whether any enhancements are needed, for example to include considerations related to the diversity of your board's student population.

As a critical part of this review, please consider opportunities to further support board and school staff with the implementation of policies and/or procedures, including the need to strengthen monitoring and compliance activities.

Next Steps

The Ministry of Education accepts the recommendations in the Deloitte report and is committed to addressing them collaboratively with our school boards and other partners. For instance, the report's findings indicate there is a desire for greater training, guidance, and resources for school boards and schools. In response, the ministry will develop or enhance training modules related to safety during outdoor education/excursions, explore opportunities for more centralized online hosting of resources related to outdoor education/excursions, and facilitate a community of practice to support ongoing information sharing between school boards. We will engage with school boards in the coming months to further discuss a detailed plan to respond to the recommendations.

We recognize the need for cooperation across the sector as we work to address these recommendations and prioritize student safety during all curriculum-linked learning experiences, including outdoor excursions. Where possible, we will leverage existing opportunities and align efforts related to student injury prevention to enhance a culture of safety-mindedness for everyone in the school environment. Further actions may be identified when the Ontario Provincial Police and Coroner investigations into the incident last summer are complete.

Webinar

As an immediate step, the Safe and Healthy Schools, Program Implementation, and French-Language Teaching and Learning branches are offering a series of webinars to discuss the funding model and reporting tool for outdoor education. We will also solicit initial feedback to help us prioritize the types of resources and/or training modules related to safety during outdoor education/excursions that would be most useful for boards.

.../3

Outdoor education leads in English-language boards can join one of the following two webinars:

- May 7th from 1:00pm – 3:00pm.
- May 8th from 10:00am – 12:00pm.

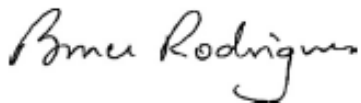
Outdoor education leads in French-language boards can join the following webinar:

- May 8th from 1:00pm – 3:00pm.

Details on the webinars and registration will be sent to your board's outdoor education lead in the coming days.

We look forward to working together as we address the recommendations to support the delivery of safe outdoor education opportunities for all students.

If you have any questions about the report or next steps, please contact Debbie Thompson, Director of the Safe and Healthy Schools Branch, at debbie.thompson@ontario.ca or (416) 325-7645.



Bruce Rodrigues
Deputy Minister

Attachments:

- Executive Summary of Deloitte Report
- PowerPoint Slide Presentation prepared by Deloitte

c: Denise Dwyer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Indigenous Education and Well-Being Division
Denys Giguère, Assistant Deputy Minister, French-Language Teaching, Learning and Achievement Division
Martyn Beckett, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Achievement Division
Debra Cormier, Director, Field Services Branch
Council of Ontario Directors of Education