

Toronto District School Board

Policy P033

Title: **EXCURSIONS**

Adopted: June 26, 2003
Effectuated: June 26, 2003
Revised: March 2013; **June 19, 2019**
Reviewed: March 2013; **June 19, 2019**
Authorization: Board of Trustees

1.0 RATIONALE

The Excursions Policy (the “Policy”) outlines the requirements for organization and execution of out-of-school excursions and field trips within the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) system.

The Policy operates within Section 171 of the *Education Act* which outlines school boards’ authority to provide field trips, activities, and programs outside of the school premises, including the ability to exercise jurisdiction over those who participate. In addition to the governing legislation, the TDSB’s Mission, Values and Goals Policy (P002), Student Health Support Policy (P092), Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051), and Equity Policy (P037) are foundational when implementing this Policy.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

To establish the Board’s commitment to and a basis for the full and equitable inclusion of all students in curriculum-based excursions while ensuring that all barriers to access are removed and that safety, accountability and transparency are paramount.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

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

Equitable Inclusion refers to the TDSB Equity Policy (P037). Excursions will be appropriate to the cultural backgrounds, and myriad experiences of all students and should proactively reflect these different ways of knowing and being. Excursions will be welcoming, safe, engaging, and appropriate to the age, maturity,

experience, health, skill, physical abilities, emotional capabilities and exceptionalities of the participants

Excursion refers to any approved, school-organized educational activity involving students that takes place off school property.

Superintendent Approved Activities refers to any activities that involve increased risk or special safety considerations, including all excursions outside the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), overnight, in/on the water, or that require special qualifications or certification for supervision as per the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) Safety Standards.

Supervision of Students refers to the overseeing for the purpose of direction, and ensuring safety and security of all participants. Supervision is the vigilant overseeing of an activity for regulation or direction. All facilities, equipment and activities have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become.

Supervisor, for the purposes of this Policy, refers to a teacher, principal, or vice-principal employed by the Board.

Volunteer, for the purposes of this Policy, refers to a person (not necessarily a teacher) who may assist in the supervision of excursions and physical education activities. Examples of volunteers are: instructional assistants, educational assistants, retired teachers, co-op students, parents/guardians and teacher candidates. These volunteers will not be the sole supervisors of any activity.

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

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Education holds primary responsibility for implementation of this Policy.

Within the Director’s Office, the responsibility for coordination and day-to-day management of the Policy is assigned to the Associate Director, Leadership, Learning and School Improvement.

5.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Policy applies to all employees and Trustees of the Board.

The Policy also covers students, parents and guardians, occasional staff, volunteers, and Board employed or affiliated registered medical/health professionals.

6.0 POLICY

- 6.1 The Board recognizes and encourages the educational value of learning experiences in the world beyond the classroom and acknowledges that excursions should be an integral part of every student's program of studies.
- 6.2 Excursions will receive the same degree of preparation and follow-up as other curricular activities.
- 6.3 Excursions will have an educational purpose with curricular relevance that is clearly identified by staff for students and their custodial parent(s)/guardian(s).
- 6.4 The written informed consent of custodial parent(s) or guardian(s) must be obtained for all excursions.
- 6.5 Parents, guardians, and students must be informed of any swim test(s) and the results of the swim test(s) prior to participating in any water based activities.
- 6.6 In alignment with the Equity Policy (P037), schools and workplaces will 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 significant events. These limitations do not apply where it is known that none of the potential participants would observe the particular day in question.
- 6.7 Every effort will be made to ensure that equitable inclusion is incorporated in the planning and execution of all excursions. These activities will proactively reflect the myriad of experiences, and the different ways of knowing and being, of all students.
- 6.8 Where possible, school Principals and Superintendents will collaborate with other schools, Principals and Superintendents to ensure the effective and efficient use of resources in planning and delivery of an excursion involving a similar destination.
- 6.9 Excursion planning will involve careful consideration and preparation in relation to addressing risk, funding, training, travel, supervision, medical and dietary needs, contingency planning and evaluation. To assist, excursion destinations must be selected from the TDSB Excursion and Event Facility Directory. Any activity not listed in the Directory requires Superintendent approval.
- 6.10 No excursion commitments with parent(s)/guardian(s) will take place until formal approval has been received and excursion forms have been authorized by the Principal, Superintendent or designate.

- 6.11 All out of country excursions require additional approval from the Executive Superintendent.
- 6.12 The Board will provide support to students to be able to participate in all excursion activities including activities requiring skills training such as swimming. Rich and diverse alternative activities, including any assessments, will be planned for all students who do not participate in any part of the excursion. As per Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, all students participating in an excursion will be allowed to complete any assessments missed due to the excursion within a reasonable time after the excursion and without penalty.
- 6.13 The principal and/or Superintendent will ensure that a sufficient number of teachers and adult supervisors accompany students on excursions as per OPHEA Standards.
- 6.14 Any incident occurring during an excursion must be reported and documented in the TDSB's online incident report. Any issues that arise will be satisfactorily resolved prior to any similar excursion occurring.
- 6.15 The TDSB's Board Code of Conduct and all other associated policies and procedures will apply to all employees, parent(s)/guardian(s), volunteers and activity destination vendors during an excursion.

7.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

The Director of Education is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this policy.

8.0 EVALUATION

This Policy is to be reviewed and updated as required but at a minimum every four (4) years.

9.0 APPENDICES

- Not Applicable

10.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Policies:

- Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051)
- Equity Policy (P037)
- Mission, Values and Goals Policy (P002)
- Student Health Support Policy (P092)

Procedures:

- Board Code of Conduct Procedure (PR585)
- Excursions Procedure (PR511)

Legislative Acts and Regulations:

- *Education Act*

Other Documents:

- Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools (Ministry of Education – 2010)
- Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) Safety Standards