

<b>Educational Field Trips</b>	
Adopted: October 6, 2014	Last Reviewed/Revised: January 2, 2023
Next Scheduled Review: 2025-2026	
<b>Associated Policies &amp; Procedures:</b> <a href="#">II-19 Educational Field Trips</a> <a href="#">VI-07 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles Driven by Other Students</a> <a href="#">VI-14 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles Driven by Volunteer Drivers</a> <a href="#">VI-98 Student Transportation Accident Procedure</a> <a href="#">II-37 Volunteers in Catholic Schools</a> <a href="#">V-04 School Fundraising Activities</a> <a href="#">VI-59 School Fundraising Activities</a> <a href="#">III-14 Employee Code of Conduct</a> <a href="#">II-39 Progressive Discipline &amp; Safety in Schools Code of Conduct - Suspensions &amp; Expulsions</a> <a href="#">VI-44 Progressive Discipline and Safety in Schools</a> <a href="#">II-40 Bullying Prevention and Intervention</a> <a href="#">II-42 Medical Health Conditions</a> <a href="#">II-47 Fees for Learning Materials, Programs and Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities</a> <a href="#">VI-39 Inclement Weather Safety</a>	

## Purpose

To outline procedures and expectations to be followed by staff regarding all educational field trips and out of classroom programs for consistency and safety of all.

## Application and Scope

This procedure applies to school administrative staff, teaching staff, support staff and volunteers in the Halton Catholic District School Board for all curricular and co-curricular trips.

## References

[Catholic School Graduate Expectations](#)

[Ministry of Education Graduate Expectations](#)

[Ontario Highway Traffic Act](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#)

## Principles

The HCDSB acknowledges that educational field trips enhance learning opportunities for students.

- Educational field trips may be considered only insofar as they meet each of the following educational validity criteria:
  - The experience shall lie within the competency and/or understanding of the students involved;
  - The experience shall have a curricular and/or co-instructional relevance for the group of students concerned;
  - The experience shall meet the Ministry of Education curriculum expectations and/or Catholic School Graduate Expectations that have been clearly identified by the teacher/trip organizer;
  - The experience shall have educational value in proportion to the time spent traveling and the time spent on the activity;
  - The experience shall promote equity and inclusion, student engagement, community and asset building, citizenship, and/or student leadership opportunities.
- Educational field trips are encouraged for all students, of all abilities, at every grade level.
- Educational field trips shall promote learning.

## Requirements

### Principal Responsibilities

- For all educational field trips the Principal shall ensure that:
  - The trip activities reflect and promote our Catholic philosophy of education and include a Faith component.
  - The contents of the “HCDSB Out of Classroom Programs Safety Guideline” is referenced and followed as the mandatory minimum safety standards for all educational field trips.
  - Out-of-school activities/events must accommodate to meet the needs for all students to participate with respect to disability, medical conditions, accessibility and/or barriers to accessibility, transportation, etc.
  - Volunteers on excursions must meet eligibility requirements as listed in *Policy II-37 Volunteers in School*.

- All supervising staff, including volunteers, must be aware of the HCDSB's expectations for staff and student behaviour and conduct as outlined in HCDSB's Policies *III-14 Employee Code of Conduct; II-39 Progressive Discipline and Safety in Schools; II-40 Bullying Prevention and Intervention; II-42 Medical Conditions*.
- Staff are responsible for addressing and resolving any medical or behavioural issues of students throughout the duration of the trip, i.e., 24/7, in accordance with HCDSB policies and in consultation with school administration, when required.
- Students and staff are not permitted to use or be in possession of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Any Code of Conduct provided and accepted by school personnel from the trip provider(s), by extension becomes the accepted Code of Conduct for staff and students in association with *III-14 Employee Code of Conduct* and *II-39 Progressive Discipline and Safety in Schools*.
- When students will be participating in physical activities on the field trip (e.g. swimming, canoeing, hiking, alpine skiing, snowboarding, cross country skiing, cycling, wall climbing, etc.), the trip organizer is to reference and follow the mandatory minimum safety standards of the activity as outlined in the "HCDSB Physical Education Curricular Safety Guidelines" for the specific activities taking place. An individual certified with St. John Ambulance Emergency First Aid or equivalent is mandatory as a participant in all excursions approved by the Extensive Trip Advisory Committee (ETAC) and is recommended in all other excursions.
- Consent to Participate, Emergency Contact and Medical Information Forms for Day Trips, Overnight Trips, and Extensive Trips including offsite physical activities must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian and are to be received from each student participating in the educational field trip, prior to the trip. These forms must be brought on the trip by the trip organizer. Verbal consent is not an accepted practice to permit students to participate on trips.
- Teacher-student ratios for the effective supervision (quantitative, qualitative) of students must be maintained throughout the entirety of the field trip:
  - while being transported to the site
  - while on site
  - participating at activities on site
  - being transported back to school

With the exception of emergency circumstances that arise on the trip.

Refer to current "Out of Classroom Program Safety Guidelines" for grade appropriate ratios.

- Out of province/country medical insurance provisions must be made for health care insurance and must be in place for each participant involved in activities that occur out of province/country.
- Often, outside organizations insist on "waiver, release/hold harmless form or agreement" being signed (by school staff or by parents/guardians) as a condition for visiting a site or

participating in an activity operated by an outside vendor. If so, send the “[Letter to Activity Operators from the School](#)” to the facility before the trip is booked. This should avoid any disagreement with the facility, which could lead to the cancellation of the trip/excursion. Principals, Vice Principals or any school staff must NOT sign waiver forms on behalf of students as a condition for visiting any location owned/operated by an outside party. If the outside organization continues to insist on waiver forms being signed by the parents/students as a condition for visiting a site or participating in an activity, schools are required to look for an alternate vendor.

- In selecting and planning field trips, Principals must review the location, activities and services that permit access by all students prior to finalizing trip arrangements.
- The premises must be physically accessible, which could include but is not limited to, ramps, elevators, automatic doors, accessible washrooms, change tables, seating, signage and safety features.
- Activities must include opportunities for participation of all students with varying exceptionalities and abilities.
- Individualized planning in consultation with the parent/guardian and/or student is required for those who have accommodation needs.

### Health Advisories/Travel Warnings

In consultation with Halton Region Health Department, the following recommendations for student international trips must be considered:

- before planning the trip, check the travel advisories with particular attention to communicable diseases spread (e.g. influenza) for that area or any other high incidence of diseases (refer to the [Public Health Agency of Canada Travel Health Notice website](#));
- carefully check the cancellation insurance clauses provided by the transportation carrier – know what is covered and what is not;
- refer to the Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Travel Reports and Warnings website: <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>.

### Cancellation Insurance

All overnight or extended excursions must make cancellation insurance available to parents/guardians. In some cases, the tour provider will provide this option with the cost of the cancellation insurance being embedded in the total price of the trip. If the cancellation insurance is offered separately, parents/guardians may choose not to buy the cancellation insurance thereby affecting the total amount payable for the trip. The tour provider should provide a disclaimer outlining any potential refund policy, if applicable.

With the exception of extensive trips (i.e., trips requiring Extensive Trip Advisory Committee (ETAC) approval), no student is to be excluded from participation on educational field trips because of inability to pay.

No student will be denied participation in a trip if the parents/guardians choose not to purchase the cancellation insurance, with the exception of Extensive Trips (i.e. trips requiring ETAC approval).

- Day Trips: In the event that a trip must be cancelled for reasons beyond the control of the school and/or HCDSB, the school principal will attempt to recover costs already paid by the parents/guardians/school or arrange to reschedule the trip on another date.
- Overnight and Extensive Trips: In the event that a trip must be cancelled for reasons beyond the control of the school and/or HCDSB, and cancellation insurance has not been purchased by the parent/guardian, the school and HCDSB are not able to reimburse parents/guardians for monies already paid for the trip.
- Students, who for disciplinary reasons, are excluded from participation of any trip, at the discretion of the Principal, after refund deadlines have expired, may not be eligible for either partial or full refunds from the school or HCDSB.
- The Principal may, at their discretion, reimburse all or partial funds in extenuating circumstances.

#### **Personal Electronic Devices (PED) Use on Day, Overnight or Extensive Trips:**

- Principals may govern and restrict the use of PED's by students while on any type of school trip. As per policy *II-39 Progressive Discipline and Safety in Schools*, Principals shall remind students that they are responsible for their conduct to the principal while on these trips, which are considered an extension of the instructional day. Accordingly, inappropriate, immoral or illegal use of any PED is subject to consequences as outlined in the School Code of Conduct.
- Digital cameras and audio/video recording devices are permitted. Principals may apply consequences for the inappropriate use of digital cameras or other photographic devices that are consistent with the School Code of Conduct.
- The HCDSB is not responsible for loss and/or damage or cost incurred with the use of PED's on the trip (i.e. Roaming Charges; Long-Distance Fees, etc.)
- The designated teacher in charge of the trip will confiscate any PED for inappropriate or unlawful use. The PED will be returned to the student at the conclusion of the trip.

#### **Teacher in Charge**

The "in charge person" is to implement the trip planning procedures as outlined in the current HCDSB "Out of Classroom Programs Safety Guidelines".

#### **Transportation**

A passenger list for each vehicle (private – e.g. car and/or commercial – e.g. bus) with license plate for each vehicle must be completed with one copy retained in the school with the Principal/designate and one copy for the vehicle.

When using Public Transit, identification of route number and/or schedule shall be communicated to the Principal, as early as possible.

When transportation is by private vehicle:



- a) Driven by Staff/Parent Volunteer: The form ‘*Authorization to Transport Students Participating in School Events*’ must be completed by the driver and approved by the Principal/designate prior to the trip.

NOTE: OSBIE does not recommend transportation of students by staff members in private vehicles.

Refer to *Administrative Procedure VI-14 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles Driven by Volunteer Drivers*.

- b) Driven by Students: To be an approved student volunteer driver by the Principal/designate all of the following conditions must be present:

- a registered student in the school;
- 18 years of age or a grade 12 student;
- holds a valid Ontario Class G2 license;
- vehicle has the HCDSB required \$1,000,000.00 insurance;
- the Student Driver Authorization form must be completed *by the owner of the vehicle signed by the parent/guardian* with signed authorization from the Principal/designate prior to the trip;
- The *Student Passenger Form* must be *completed and signed by parent/guardian* of the student and approved by the Principal/designate prior to the trip. Refer to *Administrative Procedure VI-07 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles Driven by Other Students*.

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Administrative Council

AUTHORIZED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Director of Education and Secretary of the Board*