

OUT-OF-SCHOOL EDUCATION

(A) POLICY STATEMENT

The board of trustees, hereafter referred to as the board, and the staff of River East Transcona School Division, hereafter referred to as the division, recognize that valuable and unique learning can take place outside of the school building and therefore encourages teachers to make use of the total resources of the community to meet the curriculum goals. It is the desire of the board to encourage and lend support to field trips provided that:

- (1) the learning experiences are an integral part of the instructional program;
- (2) they are properly planned using the most current/updated versions and inserts of provincially and divisionally approved standards of supervision and safety e.g., Manitoba Physical Activity Safety in Schools (MPASS).
- (3) informed consent has been granted by parent(s)/guardian(s).
- (4) the plans are well developed and implemented.
- (5) Parent(s)/guardian(s) have been provided an outline of the associated “cost per student” for the activity.

(B) BASIC OBJECTIVES

Out-of-school program activities must be appropriate to the age and developmental level of the students. The activities must be contained within reasonable limits of staff availability and expertise, staff/student time away from school, cost to students, the programming of students who do not participate, and the completion of work by those students who do participate.

The following objectives must be addressed in planning and implementing out of-school programs:

- (1) To provide educational experiences which are within the full spectrum of the curriculum. These would include out-of-school activities that develop skills, knowledge or attitudes related to: cultural diversity, civic affairs, global issues, the arts, science, physical education, vocations and the out-of-doors environment.
- (2) To provide educational experiences which are sound and are developed in concurrence with the mission and goals of the division. These can include activities of a social-recreational nature, which provide opportunities to foster self-reliance, independence and group responsibility. These can also include positive activities for the purpose of enhancing school spirit.
- (3) To provide educational experiences which provide opportunities for all students. These would include activities that encompass community-based instruction for students with diverse learning needs.

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(C) GUIDELINES

The following guidelines shall be followed when planning any out-of-school experiences.

- (1) Student safety, which includes appropriate preparation and adequate supervision, is of prime importance. Planned activities should be developmental in sequence. All extended trips should include an Emergency Action Plan (see MPASS). Special consideration must be given to specific student health concerns and life-threatening allergies, including the existence of a current individual health care plan. All staff who are planning activities or events are to use provincially approved safety and supervision guidelines as a reference (e.g., MPASS). Copies are available from the school principal.
- (2) The educational value of the activity or event is to be the first consideration when planning an out-of-school experience.
 - (a) Where appropriate, staff is encouraged to provide some form of course credit (i.e., assignment credit, unit credit, module credit) for outcomes met by those students who participate in out-of-school programs.
 - (b) The principal is responsible for periodically evaluating activities and programs to make certain that they maintain their educational value.
- (3) The duration of an out-of-school activity or event shall be determined by the nature of the program. Group programs are to involve no more than five school days.

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(D) HIGHER CARE OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS (including Ski and Snowboarding Education Programs)

- (1) The board and the division, while being supportive of challenging lifetime outdoor experiences for students, recognize the inherent physical dangers in activities such as: skiing, canoeing, kayaking, cycling, swimming, backpacking and camping.
- (2) The board and the division also recognize the importance of the standard of care to be exercised when planning these activities, as identified by the Supreme Court of Canada. Questions to be considered are:
 - (a) Is the activity suitable to the mental and physical condition, as well as the age of the participating students?
 - (b) Have the students been progressively taught and coached to perform the activity?
 - (c) Is the equipment adequate and suitably arranged?
 - (d) Is the activity being supervised properly in light of the inherent danger involved?
- (3) It is therefore expected that all staff planning out-of-school activities or events will employ the criteria for the standard of care and use and follow the guidelines identified in MPASS.

All ski trips shall have a supervisor ratio as stipulated in IJOA-R as a minimum.

When specific ratios for an activity are not established in MPASS, an appropriate adult/student ratio should be arrived at using the MPASS guidance.
- (4) Students participating in ski or snowboard education programs shall complete IJOA-E9 Parental Informed Consent for Out of School Activities – Ski or Snowboard Education Programs
- (5) Volunteers who actively participate in higher care activities must complete form IJOA-E8 – Volunteer Informed Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk for Higher Care out-of-School Activities.
- (6) While a listing of higher care activities is not provided in MPASS, all activities in MPASS are supported by detailed planning supports including risk management, environmental considerations, supervision and special rules/instructions.

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(E) **TRANSPORTATION (See IJOA-R, Section C)**

- (1) The mode of transportation to and from out-of-school activities or events shall be determined by the nature of the activities and the age of students participating.
- (2) Parents/guardians must be informed of the mode of transportation for out-of-school activity or event before the season or event and provide informed consent. Informed consent forms include:
 - (a) A brief description of the nature of the program.
 - (b) Destination and departure/arrival times.
 - (c) Mode of transportation.
- (3) All students must arrive in an authorized vehicle, and sufficient transportation must be booked to allow for this requirement. Students who arrive on their own will not be considered part of the school activity and will not be permitted to participate in the activity or event.

(F) **CLASSIFICATION**

- (1) **Kindergarten to Grade 5**
Travel within Manitoba permitted. Travel to specified destinations in northwestern Ontario permitted with the approval of the superintendent or designate.
- (2) **Grade 6 to Grade 8**
Travel within Canada and to North Dakota and Minnesota permitted.
- (3) **Grade 9 to 12**
Travel within Canada and to international destinations permitted.

(G) **AUTHORIZATION** (Refer to IJOA-R, Section B)

- (1) The principal is in authority for all day activities or events.
- (2) Extended activities or events require approval of the superintendent or designate when there is an overnight stay.
- (3) Approval from the board is required for:
 - (a) international student exchange trips;
 - (b) all middle years activities or events for students below grade 7 beyond Manitoba/NW Ontario.

(H) PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT

Signed forms must be obtained from parents/guardians granting informed consent for the son/daughter to leave the school grounds. All relevant information must be made available to parents/ guardians, including:

- description of activity or activities,
 - method of transportation,
 - behaviour expectations,
 - grounds for possible dismissal,
 - information regarding risks and risk management procedures;
 - the potential of activity or event cancellation;
 - Full disclosure to parents/guardians of associated costs to students (if applicable).
- (1) At the beginning of the year, schools may send a letter (IJOA-E1) to parents describing events in which students participate in activities in the local community (e.g., Terry Fox Walk, nature walks). In accordance with provincial standards for safety and supervision (as stated in MPASS), the letter should also outline any physical education program activities that will take students out of the school into the local community (MPASS).
 - (2) A single permission form for inter-school athletics may apply to an entire season, consisting of a cover letter, as well as a schedule for league and/or tournament play. This type of seasonal consent form and schedule may also apply to other curricular areas. Trips out of town need separate permission forms.
 - (3) All other out-of-school activities require permission on an activity or event basis (IJOA-E2).
 - (4) Any activity or event involving an overnight stay requires an information meeting for parents/guardians to ensure that consent is informed.
 - (5) Students participating in ski or snowboard education programs shall complete IJOA-E9 Parental Informed Consent for Out of School Activities – Ski or Snowboard Education Programs

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(I) SUPERVISION AND SAFETY (See IJOA-R, Section D)

- (1) School administration and supervising teachers shall ensure that adequate supervision is provided for students participating in activities outside of school.
- (2) Provincially approved standards of safety and supervision (as stated in MPASS) are to be the standard for establishing ratios for specialized activities or events with high risk.
- (3) For trips involving students of both genders, supervisors of both genders are required.

(J) SAFETY FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS & NEW CANADIANS

When planning any out-of-school activities or events, organizers must assess whether they present students new to Canada with extraordinary risks. These risks may be of a cultural (e.g., being unaccustomed to our city, lack of English language skills) or physical nature (e.g., being unaccustomed to extreme weather, snow). Staff in charge must ensure that sufficient and appropriate orientation, training and supervision minimize risk for these students.

(K) DISMISSAL FROM EXTENDED FIELD TRIPS FOR DISCIPLINARY REASONS (See IJOA-R, Section I)

- (1) A detailed listing of the rules and regulations of the activity or event, with clearly stated consequences, must be provided to the students and parents/guardians prior to departure.
- (2) Students and parents/guardians will be required to sign a conduct agreement that outlines specific procedures concerning the early return of students.
- (3) In consultation with school personnel, parents and guardians will be responsible for the arrangements for the safe return of their child in case of early dismissal from the activity or event for disciplinary reasons.
- (4) The division is not liable for any financial loss or penalty associated to a student's dismissal from a field trip.

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(L) EXTENDED FIELD TRIP CANCELLATION

The safety of students and staff is a paramount consideration when considering any educational experience beyond the school walls. For that reason, the River East Transcona School Division reserves the right to cancel any proposed activity or event should it perceive that any situation threatens the safety of students and staff. Any and all costs incurred in the case of a trip cancellation are the sole responsibility of the students and parent/guardians. All personnel planning activities or events are to make parents/guardians and students aware of this aspect of the policy prior to their deciding to place down payments.

(M) NON-PARTICIPANTS

Students not participating are expected to attend school

(N) REQUESTED ALTERATIONS TO TRIP PARTICULARS AND ITINERARY

- (1) Students participating on a school organized event/trip must adhere to the established schedule, specifically departure and arrival times.
- (2) Requests from parents for their child to arrive late or depart early for an event/trip will not be accepted.
- (3) At no time during the schedule of an event/trip shall a student travel unsupervised.
- (4) Parents requesting the withdrawal of their child prior to the event/trip will be responsible for any financial loss, loss of deposit or penalty due to trip cancelation.

Effective Date:	December 16, 2003	Review Date: January 2020
Amended Date:	June 1, 2004; June 21, 2005; March 20, 2007; April 15, 2014; December 20, 2016; November 15, 2022	
Board Motion(s):	683/03; 370/04; 349/05; 96/07; 105/14;325/16;278/22	
Legal/Cross Reference:	Manitoba Physical Activity Safety in Schools website (www.mpass.schools)	