
HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 67

POLICY HANDBOOK

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POLICY

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION SUPPORTS OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATING, COMPETING AND/OR PERFORMING PROVIDED SUCH ACTIVITIES HAVE EDUCATIONAL AND/OR ATHLETIC VALUE AND STUDENT WELFARE IS REASONABLY ASSURED.

DEFINITIONS

For proper planning and approval of any field trip, off-campus activity or student travel, the activity organizers must first determine both the risk level and the destination classification.

Risk Levels:

Risk levels (color coded as Green, Amber or Red) are based on the potential for injury or harm.

- Green = Low risk
- Amber = Some risk to moderate risk, may be approved with a proper risk management plan; and
- Red = High risk, prohibited.

Refer to “*Risk levels for field trips, off-campus activities and student travel*”, (see **Attachment A**), to determine the risk level of an activity.

If your activity is not listed, contact the superintendent. Note that “*Risk levels for field trips, off-campus activities and student travel*” was developed to address risk factors. Many field trips occur involving no or low risk activities, such as a class visit to the museum. Field trips, off-campus activities or student travel that does not include physical activities or recreational pursuits will generally be considered low risk, and thus be labeled as green activities.

Destination Classifications:

Destination classifications are determined by the length of absence and distance travelled from the school.

- Day trip in province
- Day trip out of province
- One overnight (not school competition) or two overnight (school competition) in province
- One overnight (not school competition) or two overnight (school competition) out of province
- More than one overnight (not school competition) or two overnight (school competition) in province
- More than one overnight (not school competition) or two overnight (school competition) out of province
- International trips

GUIDELINES

1. School sponsored off-site activities must be authorized by the principal, or as the case may be, the superintendent or designate.
2. Level of documentation, and authorization required shall be determined by the combination of both risk level (Green or Amber) and destination classification (see “*Risk level and destination classification: Planning guide*” **attachment B**).
 - 2.1. All High Risk (Red) activities are strictly prohibited regardless of destination

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REGULATIONS

1. Approval

The Board reserves the right to cancel any off-site activity if it deems that it is in the best interest and safety of the students to do so. Therefore, it is incumbent on the teacher-in-charge and the principal to consider all inherent risks, and in the case of high cost activities, to recommend to parents/guardians that they obtain travel cancellation insurance.

- 1.1 Horizon personnel as approved by the principal must:
 - (a) consult with and obtain the approval of the principal or superintendent in principle before discussing moderate risk off-site activities to students and parents
 - (b) submit for approval a “*field trip proposal form*” (see principal approval – **attachment C**, or superintendent approval – **attachment D**) that includes:
 - i. a statement of purpose that explicitly defines instructional objectives or outcomes associated with the purpose.
 - ii. outlines intended lead-up and follow-up activities; and
 - iii. specifies any inherent risks and what actions will be taken to reduce those risks.
 - iv. No “*Field trip proposal form*” is required for low risk day trips within the province. Teachers still require verbal approval from the principal.
- 1.2 Horizon personnel as approved by the principal must:
 - (a) meet the Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools (<http://acicr.ca/resources/safety-guidelines-for-physical-activity-in-alberta-schools> or https://education.alberta.ca/media/1109586/sg_physicalactivity.pdf) to minimize inherent risk, and assist teachers in focusing on safe instructional practices;
 - (b) where practically possible and if it would enhance the welfare of students, have visited the location of the off-site activity prior to the trip and be familiar with the seasonal conditions at the time of the trip;
 - (c) consult and meet **Policy EEACAA** “Private Vehicles and Volunteer Drivers” and **Policy EEACAB** “Division-Owned Co-Curricular/Extra-Curricular Activity Vehicles”;
 - (d) ensure that, at minimum, one of the supervising adults or resource persons has the training and/or knowledge appropriate for conducting the trip;
 - (e) select appropriate volunteers for the activity, and provide volunteers with direction as to the requirements of the trip and their responsibilities, before the departure of the off-site activity;
 - (f) ensure that the appropriate trip documentation, such as trip itinerary, supervisor and student responsibilities, emergency contacts, etc., accompanies the teacher-in-charge, and that a copy has been filed with the principal;
 - (g) advise students regarding trip hazards and appropriate safety procedures; and
 - (h) ensure that a precise attendance count is taken at all points of departure on the trip
 - (i) file a student list with the school prior to departure.
 - (j) in addition to the safety guidelines above, schools wishing to go on alpine skiing activities must review with, students, staff, and parents, and comply with the guidelines of **attachment K**.
- 1.3 No trip may proceed unless it has received the appropriate approval. Before approving an off-site activity, the principal or superintendent must be satisfied that:
 - (a) all inherent risks have been considered and there are procedures in place for managing the key inherent risks of the activities and environment. If there is any doubt, the principal shall contact the superintendent for a second opinion;
 - (b) the teacher understands policies and procedures defining the teacher’s responsibilities and duty of care;
 - (c) the current Safety Guidelines (See 1.2 (a) above) have been met or exceeded;

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- (d) the students, teachers, staff, volunteers and parents/guardians will receive the appropriate information about the trip; and
 - (e) arrangements are in place for covering all the financial matters, including a refund procedure, and an accounting for all expenditures.
- 1.4 The principal has the authority to approve any low-risk/green, off-site activity, (see “*Risk levels for field trips, off-campus activities and student travel*”, **attachment A**, and “*Risk level and destination classification: Planning guide*” **attachment B**) within Alberta that is a day trip, or that involves one overnight accommodation, or that involves two overnight accommodations and is in conjunction with a school competition. Approval for these trips should be obtained as early as possible prior to departure (see “*Risk level and destination classification: Planning guide*” **attachment B**).
- (a) The principal must forward a copy of the “*field trip proposal form*” (see **attachment C**) to the superintendent when such trips have students departing beyond jurisdictional boundaries.
 - i. Trips into Lethbridge do not need to be forwarded to the superintendent
- 1.5 Approval for all moderate/amber risk activities (this includes alpine skiing and/or snowboarding) or other overnight trips (e.g. those involving more than 1-night accommodation, or in the case of school competitions, those involving more than 2-night accommodation) shall be obtained from the superintendent at least two months prior to departure (see “*Risk level and destination classification: Planning guide*” **attachment B**).
- (a) “*Teacher/Leader Qualifications Assessment Form*” (see **attachment E**) must accompany the “*field trip approval form*” when seeking superintendent approval for moderate risk/Amber activities)
 - (b) In exceptional circumstances, the superintendent may reduce the two month approval time for off-site activities.

2. Supervision

- 2.1 The number of supervisors will vary according to the age and maturity of the students and the nature of the activity. **As a guide**, the acceptable standard of supervision for all off-site activities:
- (a) for students in kindergarten, is one adult to 5 students;
 - (b) for students in grades 1 to 3, is one adult to 8 students;
 - (c) for students in grades 4 to 9, is one adult to 10 students; and
 - (d) for students in grades 10 to 12, is one adult to 15 students.
- 2.2 Where off-site activities include overnight stays, additional supervision should be provided and consideration should be given to include both female and male supervisors.
- 2.3 Additional supervision must be considered for off-site activities involving:
- (a) increased risks;
 - (b) large numbers of students;
 - (c) participation of students with special needs;
 - (d) crowded venues;
 - (e) trips that are new to the sponsoring school community; or
 - (f) for overnight trips, if members of the same family group are supervising students.
- 2.4 Teachers and responsible parents are preferred as supervisors.
- 2.5 Depending on the nature of the activity, consideration should be given to having a supervisor who is trained in first aid and proper first aid equipment should be available.
- 2.5.1 A certified first aider must be present on all moderate risk activities

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3. Safety Guidelines

The standards set out in the appropriate Safety Guidelines (See 1.2(a) above) must be met or exceeded for all off-site activities.

4. Distance Limits for Elementary Students

4.1 Off-site activities for elementary students are limited to trips in Alberta.

4.3 Off-site activities for elementary students outside the limits established in sections 4.1 will be considered on an individual basis if:

- (a) the principal supports the request;
- (b) the request is submitted to the superintendent four months before any commitment is made; and
- (c) the superintendent gives approval to proceed with planning.

5. Distance Limits for Junior High Students

5.1 Off-site activities for Junior High students are limited to trips in Canada.

6. International Travel

6.1 Only senior high students or grade nine (9) students participating in senior high trips may be authorized to attend trips outside of Canada.

6.2 International travel will not be approved for countries where the Canadian Government has determined official travel advisories (avoid non-essential travel, and avoid all travel).

6.2.1 International travel will only be approved for countries where the Canadian Government travel risk level states, “Exercise normal security precautions; there are no significant security concerns”.

6.2.2 Countries where the risk level states, Exercise a high degree of caution; there are identifiable security concerns; travelers should be alert and vigilant to their surroundings) may receive approval depending on the unique circumstances of the identifiable security concerns.

6.3 The “*International Field Trip Planning Guide*” (see **attachment I**) MUST be attached with the “*field trip proposal form*” (see superintendent approval – **attachment D**) when seeking permission for International Trips outside of Canada

6.4 A parent meeting that provides detailed information and opportunities for questions is a mandatory component early in the planning phase.

6.5 The supervisor for any off-site activities outside of North America is responsible for contacting the appropriate recommended health authority in Alberta to determine immunization for supervisors and students for travel to the area.

6.6 All students participating in international trips must have their vaccinations up to date as recommended by the health authority. Students are to submit copies of these records to the teacher in charge. Upon return, the copies will be returned to the student.

6.7 Adequate travel and health insurance must be obtained for each participant, including supervisors.

6.7.1 Cancellation insurance is strongly encouraged.

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7. Activity Duration and Substitute Costs

- 7.1 Student absence is NOT to exceed three school days unless written permission has been provided by the Superintendent of Schools.

8. Activity Duration and Substitute Costs

- 8.1 The cost of providing substitutes for staff is the responsibility of the individual school involved.

9. Parent Permission

- 9.1 Parents/Guardians must be informed in writing of the following information about off-site activities (see “*Parent/Guardian Consent/Risk Acknowledgement Form*” **attachment F**)
- (a) the purpose and educational objectives of the off-site activity;
 - (b) the name of the teacher-in-charge and a contact telephone number;
 - (c) the date(s) of the trip;
 - (d) the destination and, where possible, a map of the area;
 - (e) a detailed itinerary, setting out the general nature and number of activities;
 - (f) departure and return times;
 - (g) mode of transportation;
 - (h) financial arrangements;
 - (i) safety precautions;
 - (j) level of supervision;
 - (k) the date of the parent meeting, if one is being held;
 - (l) any risks associated with the activity, including official government travel advisories (official information and advice from the Government of Canada on situations that may affect their safety and well-being abroad);
 - (m) a reminder that parents or guardians must inform the teacher-in-charge about any relevant medical conditions of the student including proof of immunization, if required (individuals in charge should be aware of students with Policy IHCD: Medication to Students/Medical Conditions including attachment A: Medical Management Plan);
 - (n) emergency procedures to be followed in the event of injury, illness or unusual circumstances;
 - (o) the need for additional medical coverage for out-of-province or out-of-country trips;
 - (p) any other relevant information about the trip which may influence the parent’s or guardian’s decision to withhold permission, such as a controversial museum exhibit; and
 - (q) the standard of conduct expected of students and that a student may be sent home from activities at parent’s expense if the behavior of the student is unacceptable.
 - (r) Parents must be informed that
 - (r.1) the superintendent reserves the right to cancel, and end trips early if the superintendent feels the risks are too great.
 - (r.2) the jurisdiction does not accept responsibility for any lost travel deposits or costs due to cancelled trips by either the jurisdiction or third party travel company for events beyond its control, including but not limited to instability in a destination country, acts of God, war (whether declared or undeclared), terrorist activities, incidents of violence, public health issues or quarantine, strikes, government restrictions, fire or severe weather conditions that make it impossible or unreasonable to conduct the trip.
- 9.2 One permission form is acceptable for a series of off-site activities or a number of distinct activities within the community, as long as all activities meet the requirements of 8.1 above and parents are notified of the activity within a reasonable time prior to the activity taking place.

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- 9.3 When an off-site activity includes students from two or more schools:
- (a) the principal of each school involved must approve the participation of their students; and
 - (b) students from all the schools are accountable to the teacher-in-charge.

10. Student’s Responsibility

Each student participating in an off-site activity must:

- (a) comply with the rules of the school and the requirements of the school’s student code of conduct;
- (b) fulfill all the preparatory requirements at an appropriate level of performance;
- (c) dress appropriately according to the type of off-site activity;
- (d) cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services;
- (e) participate in a responsible and cooperative manner during the trip;
- (f) account to the teacher in charge for their conduct;
- (g) respect the rights of others; and
- (h) carry out all follow-up procedures in an appropriate manner.

11. Volunteers

11.1. Volunteers are expected to know the details of the off-site activity and their specific duties and authority prior to departure (see **Policy GFA**).

11.2 Volunteers must:

- (a) consent/acknowledge risk (see “*Volunteer Consent/Risk Acknowledgement Form*” **attachment G**)
- (b) provide medical information (see “*Volunteer Medical Information Form*” **attachment H**)
- (c) support and follow the school code of conduct;
- (d) report any inappropriate conduct to the teacher-in-charge;
- (e) adhere to the schedule or itinerary;
- (f) dress appropriately according to the type of off-site activity; and
- (g) fulfill their duties during assigned time

11.3 A criminal record check may be required of any volunteer (see **Policy GFA**).