



DISTRICT PRACTICE 8600

FIELD TRIPS

DEFINITIONS

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

A local extension of the classroom or similar activities of a very low risk nature, occurring close to the school (e.g., short off-site walks) and at the discretion of the principals. Teacher/leader to student ratio is at the discretion of the principal.

BACKCOUNTRY

Semi-remote to remote location out of the community (e.g. river, wilderness lake, complex terrain with multiple junctions, long steep climbs/descents, rough trail terrain) with limited or no cell phone service or bus radio service; lack of clear boundaries for activity, potentially far from support services, buildings and/or vehicles not immediately accessible; more than 30 minutes from a facility with available physician and lifesaving measures and/or more than 30 minutes from emergency support services (e.g., EMS, Search and Rescue, first responders) arriving on site.

FIELD TRIP

A field trip is an activity held outside of the school grounds and is not a travel excursion. It is a trip to a specified location and applies to both curricular and extracurricular activities. There are two types of field trips: low risk and higher care. Field trips require advance planning and permission. Information regarding lower risk field trips should be forwarded to your principal at least three weeks prior to the date of the anticipated event and information regarding higher care field trips should be forwarded to the Superintendent at least two (2) months prior to the date of the anticipated event.

Low risk field trip

- The trip shall not involve any special safety considerations (e.g. does not include skiing, mountain biking, open water activities, outdoor rock or ice climbing, or back country activities).
- Granting final approval for low risk field trips shall be the responsibility of the principal unless supervision ratios are less than the guidelines provided below.
- The principal of each school shall formulate procedures for approval and supervision of low risk field trips.
- In all cases, such approval must be obtained prior to the commencement of detailed planning or fundraising.

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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FORM 8600.1 ANNUAL PARENT GUARDIAN INFORMED CONSENT FOR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

FORM 8600.2 PARENT GUARDIAN INFORMED CONSENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK FOR LOW RISK FIELD TRIPS

FORM 8600.3 PARENT GUARDIAN INFORMED CONSENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK FOR HIGHER CARE OUTDOOR, OPEN WATER ACTIVITIES, AND TRAVEL EXCURSIONS

FORM 8600.4 PROPOSAL FOR LCOAL LOW RISK OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES

FORM 8600.5 HIGHER CARE OUTDOOR AND AQUATIC ACTIVITIES, AND TRAVEL EXCURSIONS PROPOSAL

ADOPTED: February 1999

Amended: June 2003, February 2005, October 2008, June 2011, June 2013, November 2013, December 2017, October 11, 2022, September 12, 2023



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- Once the principal approves the low risk field trip, the plans need to be forwarded to the District Administration Building. No further approvals are required.
 - Low risk field trip information will be consolidated into a report to the Board of Education in the following September.

Examples of low risk field trips

- See Appendix A

Higher care field trip

- Higher care field trips require special safety considerations (e.g. skiing, mountain biking, open water activities, outdoor rock or ice climbing, or back country activities).
- Higher care field trips that require special safety considerations require the teacher/leader and/or a third party provider to be certified in the activity (e.g. taking students rock climbing require the teacher/leader to be ACMG certified or hire a certified professional and provide their certification. Evidence of certification is not required for well-established third party business vendors).
- Once the principal approves the higher care field trip, the plans need to be forwarded to the District Administration Building for Superintendent review and approval. Final approval resides with the Field Trip Committee, a committee of the Board of Education.
- Once final approval is received by the Field Trip Committee, the approved package will be sent back to the school.
- Higher care field trip information will be consolidated into a report to the Board of Education in the following September.

Examples of Higher Risk Field Trips

- See Appendix B

NOTE: Downhill skiing is considered a higher risk trip and as such the district will offer this activity beginning at grade 4.

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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TRAVEL EXCURSIONS

Travel excursions are overnight event/activities held outside of the school's boundary. Overnight travel excursions will be considered for students in grades 4-12. These include curricular and extracurricular activities. There are two types of excursions: low care and higher care. Travel excursions require advance planning and permission. Information regarding these trips should be forwarded to the Superintendent at least two (2) months prior to the date of the anticipated event.

Lower care travel excursions

- The destination for these trips shall not be beyond British Columbia or Alberta;
- The trip shall not be more than two (2) days (i.e. one overnight) in duration
- The trip shall not involve any special safety considerations (e.g. skiing, mountain biking, open water activities, outdoor rock or ice climbing, or back country activities).
- Once approval is granted by the principal, the lower care travel excursion planning package is required to be sent to the District Administration Building. No further approvals are required.
- Low risk travel excursion information will be consolidated into a report to the Board of Education in the following September.

Examples of lower care travel excursions

- One night overnight for a sport tournament

Higher care travel excursions

Higher care travel excursions may include one or all of the bullets below:

- The destination for these trips is beyond British Columbia and Alberta or
- The trip is within BC and in excess of two(2) days (i.e. two overnight) in duration; or
- The trip may involve special safety considerations (e.g. skiing, mountain biking, open water activities, outdoor rock or ice climbing, or back country activities or international travel, etc.).
- Whenever possible such trips should be planned around holidays in order to minimize the number of instructional days lost.
- Higher care travel excursions that require special safety considerations require the teacher/leader and/or a third party provider to be certified in the activity. (e.g. taking students rock climbing require the teacher/leader to be ACMG certified or hire a third party provider with certification).

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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- The Field Trip committee may grant up to a total of five (5) Teacher-on-Call days for a higher care trip. Trips requiring more than five (5) Teacher-on-Call days need to be forwarded to the Board by the Field Trip Committee.
 - For trips outside Canada, parents are required to ensure medical coverage and a passport for their child, and will be required to sign a consent and waiver form which is recommended by the Schools Protection Program.
 - Under certain circumstances where it is impossible to foresee higher care trips special consideration will be given without the usual two (2) month notice.
 - Once the principal approves the higher care travel excursion, the plans need to be forwarded to the District Administration Building for Superintendent review and approval. Final approval resides with the Field Trip Committee.
 - Once final approval is received by the Field Trip Committee, the approved package will be sent back to the school.
 - This information will be consolidated into a report to the Board of Education in the following September.

Examples of higher care travel excursions

- Two or more overnights for a sport tournament
- Group touring post secondary facilities for two or more nights
- Provincials for two or more nights
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NOTE: all field trip and travel excursion requests must include a curricular connection to be considered for approval. Extracurricular field trips and travel excursions must be noted as such in the forms.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

School District No. 6 (Rocky Mountain) is located in the Columbia Valley which offers teachers and students an environment rich with learning opportunities. The area boasts many lakes, rivers, ski hills, hiking and biking and trails to explore. Many of these locations are without cellular service which makes these areas higher risk. The Board of Education supports outdoor learning opportunities but puts student safety at the centre of all decision making.

There are three types of field trips:

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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Curricular field trips are trips that are directed towards students achieving specific learning outcomes for which students are assessed. (Examples of field trips are that are connected to curricular outcomes such as science and math and involve the entire class and are during the school day). Fees are not charged for curricular field trips.

Co-curricular activities supplement the instructional program normally occurring during school time. (Examples of this type of involvement include an extension of classroom activities, activity days and special events such as skiing).

Extra-curricular activities are those activities normally held outside of school time. (Inter-school sport activities, club and cultural travel are examples of this type of student participation). Fees are charged for these trips

- Student participation in a field trip which involves extra-curricular or co-curricular activities is optional and there may be a charge to cover the costs of transportation, accommodation, meals, entrance fees and equipment rentals. However, a field trip shall not be considered optional if it is required for students to complete specified learning outcomes or assessment requirements for a course.
- An alternative delivery for the required learning outcomes could be managed by the parent after discussion with the principal.
- In the case of optional field trips, alternate activities shall be provided to students who choose not to participate in the field trip. Students attending an optional field trip are not to be charged for the cost of providing a teacher on call for the students who choose not to participate in the field trip. Furthermore, the principal shall facilitate the inclusion of students who might otherwise be excluded due to financial hardship.
- Extended or out of province field trips shall normally be scheduled during vacation breaks in the school year. School field trips need to be managed to minimize the disruption to student learning of those on the trip and for the students at the school level.

When planning outdoor classroom activities, a field trip or travel excursion, the field trip/travel excursion leader will carefully consider the implications for student safety and the requirements for student conduct.

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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Should a teacher determine that, in considering the responsibility for safety for all students, a student’s conduct may jeopardize personal safety or the safety of others, the teacher will, as soon as possible:

- Communicate with the principal, the student’s parents, and, as appropriate, may consult with the other staff involved in the student’s program.
- School rules will be adhered to on all outdoor classroom activities, field trips and travel excursions.
 - The field trip/travel excursion leader is responsible for the arrangement and supervision of the travel. The principal must ensure that the transportation of pupils is in accordance with Board policy and district practice; and to ensure that any special requirements connected with the trip are met.
- Collect volunteer emergency information prior to field trip or travel excursion

The decision to proceed with/not proceed with a field trip is at the discretion of the field trip organizer. This is to be respected by our school communities and the Board of Education will support that decision.

SUPERVISION RATIOS:

The table below be used as a general guideline to help teacher/leader to student ratios.

Overall Trip Risk Rating	Suggested Minimum Ratio		
Outdoor classroom activities	At the discretion of the principal		
Low Risk*	Ages 5-8 (1:6)*	Ages 9-12 (1:10)*	Age 13+ (1:15)*
Moderate Risk	Ages 5-8 (1:6)	Ages 9-12 (1:8)	Age 13+ (1:10)
Higher Care	Ages 5-8 (1:4)	Ages 9-12 (1:6)	Age 13+ (1:8)

*For low risk field trips, excluding low risk travel excursions, ratios may be lowered based on circumstances, locations, and experience of teacher/leader. Rationale for lower ratios must be in writing to the principal on the field trip form and approved by the Superintendent.

NOTE: Education Assistants who provide assigned and specific support for one student are NOT considered in the supervision ratios.

NOTE: International travel excursions adult to student ratios may be subject to tour company regulations

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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varying from the risk assessment and supervision ratio calculation too. If there is a discrepancy between the two, the number of supervisors will be the higher of the two.

Schools and field trip leaders will make professionally appropriate decisions when assigning supervisors to groups of students to be supervised.

Schools will communicate to parents, information regarding supervision arrangements, including the names of the supervisors. Any changes should be communicated to parents in as timely a fashion as possible.

TRANSPORTATION:

- All transportation practices shall adhere to the regulations and requirements of the [Motor Vehicle Act](#).
- When a group of more than fourteen (14) students is being transported, a school bus or commercial vehicle and a professional driver must be considered.
- If private passenger vehicles are being utilized, the principal must ensure that policy and district practice are being followed.
- The Board of Education will not be responsible for physical damage or repairs to the individual's vehicle or for the loss of use or safe driver discount resulting from the use of the vehicle on school business.

FORMS

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

- 1) Complete Form 8600.1, Annual Parent/Guardian Informed Consent for Outdoor Classroom Activities.
- 2) These forms are to remain at the school.

LOW RISK FIELD TRIPS

- 1) Complete Form 8600.4, the Proposal for Local Low Risk Field Trip form (includes Risk Assessment and Supervision Calculation Tool and Checklist for Local Low Risk)

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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- 2) Complete parent/guardian consent and waiver (This does not need to be submitted with field trip package to the District Administration Building).
- 3) Principal approval required.
- 4) Submit to the District Administration Building. Information will be collated into a report to the Board of Education in the following September.

HIGHER CARE FIELD TRIPS

- 1) Complete Form 8600.5, Proposal for Higher Care Outdoor and Open Water Activities and Travel Excursions
- 2) Complete Risk Assessment and Supervision Ratio Calculation Tool.
- 3) Complete a Risk Management Plan (Provide an itinerary card if involved in backcountry or water based travel (e.g. canoe excursions with map attached.)
- 4) Complete teacher/leaders readiness form for higher care activities if you are instructing and leading activity OR/ provide contractor information including certifications/licensing.
- 5) Complete Parent/Guardian consent, permission form, and waiver for children participating in a higher care activity.
- 6) Complete Volunteer Application, Consent, Permission form and waiver, and Health Form for higher care activities.
- 7) Complete Checklist for Higher Care Activities.
- 8) Email the checklist with proposal, detailed trip plan, risk management plan, teacher/leader readiness form, volunteer forms to the District Administration Building for review no later than two months prior to the planned event.
- 9) The package will be sent to the Superintendent for review and approval. Final approval resides with the Field Trip committee.
- 10) Once approved, the approved field trip will be sent back to the school. Information will be collated into a report to the Board of Education in the following September

LOW RISK/HIGHER CARE TRAVEL EXCURSIONS

1. Complete the Proposal for Local Low Risk Field Trip form.
2. Complete Risk Assessment and Supervision Ratio Calculation Tool.
3. Complete a Risk Management Plan (Provide an itinerary card if involved in backcountry or water based travel i.e. canoe excursions with map attached.)
4. Complete teacher/leaders readiness form for low risk/higher care travel excursions if you are

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5. Complete Parent/Guardian consent, permission form, and waiver for children participating in higher care activity.
6. Complete Volunteer Application, Consent, Permission form and waiver, and Health Form for higher care activities.
7. Complete Checklist for Low Risk/Higher Care Travel Excursions.
8. Email the checklist with proposal, detailed trip plan, risk management plan, teacher/leader readiness form, volunteer forms to the District Administration Building for review no later than two months prior than then planned event.
9. The package will be sent to the Superintendent for review and approval. Final approval resides with the Field Trip committee.
10. Once approved, the approved field trip will be sent back to the school. Information will be collated into a report to the Board of Education in the following September

NOTE: Low risk travel excursions only require principal approval.

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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FIELD TRIPS APPENDIX A – Examples of common lower care field trips and supervision ratios

This is not an exhaustive list of field trips but it is intended to provide quick information for field trip organizers. It is up to teachers and principals to determine how best to meet their curricular objectives.

Student Grade	Number of Supervisors to Students
K – 3	1:6 / 2:12
4 – 7	1:10 / 2:20
8 – 12	1:15 / 2:30

- Playgrounds
- Short off-site walks
- Walking/sightseeing
- Educational site/Attraction visits (e.g., museums, art galleries, zoos, botanical gardens, science centres, aquariums, observations, planetariums, and other similar centres)
- Cultural and performing arts
- Sport event outings
- Industry visits
- Farm visits
- Neighbourhood/park/highway clean-ups
- Special events
- Sports and games
- Day hiking (simple terrain, local, within cell phone range, minimal fitness required, clear boundaries, close to emergency services – less than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
- Orienteering
- Cross country running

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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FIELD TRIPS APPENDIX A – Examples of common lower care field trips and supervision ratios

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- Cycling (simple terrain, local, within cell phone range, minimal fitness required, clear boundaries, close to emergency services – less than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
 - Small wheel activities (i.e. inline skating, roller skating, scootering, skateboarding, longboarding, roller skiing, heelies)
 - Wide games (small to large group game activities that involve moving [generally running] through a semi-natural to natural environment)
 - Initiative tasks/Trust activities
 - Camping (near buildings and/or vehicles)
 - Local camping pitching camp in the schoolyard or at a local park or other well supported local site.
 - Residential camping –staying at a camp/outdoor centre with dorm/cabin/wall tent or other permanent or semi-permanent accommodations.
 - Front country camping – staying in a relatively nearby established public or private campground, with vehicle support on-site-less than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site.
 - Mountain biking/Fat Biking/BMX Biking (simple terrain, local, within cell phone range, minimal fitness required, clear boundaries, close to emergency services – less than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
 - Ropes Courses / Challenge Courses
 - Bouldering
 - Artificial Wall Climbing (Indoor or Outdoor)
 - Horseback Riding (simple terrain, local, within cell phone range, minimal fitness required, clear boundaries, close to emergency services – less than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
 - Wilderness steambaths

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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FIELD TRIPS APPENDIX A – Examples of common lower care field trips and supervision ratios

- Aquatics (i.e swimming pool with certified lifeguards, hotel pool with appropriate adult supervision)
- Tobogganing/sledding/tubing
- Ice skating
- Cross country skiing (simple terrain, local, within cell phone range, minimal fitness required, clear boundaries, close to emergency services – less than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
- Snowshoeing (simple terrain, local, within cell phone range, minimal fitness required, clear boundaries, close to emergency services – less than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
- Ice fishing

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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FIELD TRIPS APPENDIX B – Examples of common higher care field trips and supervision ratios

This is not an exhaustive list of field trips but it is intended to provide quick information for field trip organizers. It is up to teachers and principals to determine how best to meet their curricular objectives.

Student Grade	Number of Supervisors to Students
K – 3*	1:4/2:8
4 – 7	1:6/2:12
8 – 12	1:8 / 2:16

- Travel excursion is two or more nights away from home community.
- Day hiking (complex terrain, multiple junctions, long steep climbs/descents, rough terrain, semi- remote or remote location, limited or no cell phone range, significant fitness required, lack of clear boundaries, not close to emergency services – more than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
- Camping (more that .5km from buildings or vehicles; not close to emergency services – more than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
- Mountain biking/Fat Biking/BMX Biking (complex terrain, multiple junctions, steep rough terrain, semi- remote or remote location, limited or no cell phone range, significant fitness required, lack of clear boundaries, not close to emergency services – more than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site, certification required)
- Rock Climbing (Outdoor: top rope, fixed face, certification required)
- Rappelling/abseiling
- Horseback Riding (distant from buildings or vehicles, multiple junctions, steep ups and downs, significant water

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

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FORM 8600.3 PARENT GUARDIAN INFORMED CONSENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK FOR HIGHER CARE OUTDOOR, OPEN WATER ACTIVITIES, AND TRAVEL EXCURSIONS

FORM 8600.4 PROPOSAL FOR LCOAL LOW RISK OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES

FORM 8600.5 HIGHER CARE OUTDOOR AND AQUATIC ACTIVITIES, AND TRAVEL EXCURSIONS PROPOSAL

ADOPTED: February 1999

Amended: June 2003, February 2005, October 2008, June 2011, June 2013, November 2013, December 2017, October 11, 2022, September 12, 2023



DISTRICT PRACTICE 8600

FIELD TRIPS APPENDIX B – Examples of common higher care field trips and supervision ratios

crossings or other hazards, more than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)

- Aquatics (i.e swimming in lake area with no lifeguards, lack of clear boundaries, more than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
- Canoeing/kayaking/multiple paddler craft/rafting/rowing/sailing/paddleboarding/ snorkeling (substantial body of water, semi-remote to remote location, lack of clear boundaries, more than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site, certification required)
- Cross country skiing (including Nordic Centers - complex terrain, multiple junctions, long steep climbs/descents, rough terrain, semi- remote or remote

location, limited or no cell phone range, significant fitness required, lack of clear boundaries, not close to emergency services – more than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)

- Snowshoeing (including Nordic Centers - complex terrain, multiple junctions, long steep climbs/descents, rough terrain, semi- remote or remote location, limited or no cell phone range, significant fitness required, lack of clear boundaries, not close to emergency services – more than 20 minutes from EMS arrival on-site)
- Winter camping
- Alpine (Downhill) Skiing / Snowboarding (Grades 4+)

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

DISTRICT PRACTICE 8600 FIELD TRIPS

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DISTRICT PRACTICE 8600

FIELD TRIPS APPENDIX B – Examples of common higher care field trips and supervision ratios

Commonly visited locations that require higher care field trip approvals:

Any location that is 30 minutes or more from emergency response services being on-site

All ski resorts

All Nordic centres

All open bodies of water (lakes and rivers)

All outdoor climbing areas

All National Parks

Nipika Mountain Resort

Columbia Outdoor School and Blue Lake Camp

*Note – High risk activities require field trip organizers to critically assess the activity and determine if there are options to mitigate the risks to a point that minimizes risk to students. This may include increasing supervision, changing a location, specialized training, certified instructors, equipment, or not proceeding with the field trip etc.

REFERENCES: [Youth Safe Outdoors](#)

DISTRICT PRACTICE 8600 FIELD TRIPS

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