



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EXCURSION AND LAND TRIP POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Department of Education ('the Department') recognizes the importance that Excursions and Land trips serve to enhance the education program and to provide opportunities for social and academic development. The Department also recognizes that learning needs to take place in different environments, not just within the four walls of a school classroom. Excursions and on lands trips reinforce the Department's commitment to all the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* principles, as well qualities such as, *Qaujimajumaniq* (curiosity), *Uukturarniq* (experimentation) and *Ikpigusugunnarniq Inuuqatiminik* (respecting others).

PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Encourage schools Excursions and Land Trips as a way to engage students in the learning process and deliver education program in a more culturally relevant way;
- Provide guidelines and procedures for the approval of schools Excursions and Land Trips; and
- Ensure that all precautions are taken to promote the safety of students, staff and volunteers.

APPLICATION / SCOPE

This policy applies to the approval, planning and delivery of all school sanctioned excursions and land trips involving Nunavut students that take place in Nunavut, within Canada and outside Canada.

This policy cannot replace any established health and safety policy, procedure, process or best practices that apply when using:

- Motorized vehicles such as buses, boats, snowmobiles or any other means of transportation; and
- Firearms and knives.

It does not replace or modify established responsibilities of Principals and District Education Authorities (DEAs) in the management of schools. The Excursion and Land Trip policy does not replace or modify the Nunavut Teachers' Association's (NTA) by-laws or the NTA Collective Agreement. The Excursion and Land Trip policy does not replace or modify the the Nunavut Employee's Union (NEU) rules or the NEU Collective Agreement.

DEFINITIONS

Contingency plan: The written plan which details a course of action to be follow if the planned or existing conditions change, such as the early termination or delay of an excursion due to a change in weather, participants behavior or medical reasons.

Detailed Program Plan for Participants and Parents/Guardians: The written notification for parents and/or guardians and participants outlining the reasons and objectives and desired outcomes of an Excursion or Land Trip. It will outline a complete itinerary, hygiene, health and clothing requirements, cost and the supervision plan.

Emergency action plan: The written plan which details step-by-step procedures to follow in emergencies, such as a missing participant, injury, or major accident. An emergency action plan also includes information such as, in the event of an injury, who to notify, required actions, and the location of First Aid Kits.

Excursions: Any activity organized for a social, cultural, recreational, educational or athletic purpose involving students leaving the school, during or outside of a regular school day. All excursions must be led by the Teacher-in-Charge and supervised by a teacher or an approved non-teacher adult.

Land Trips: Any activity involving travel away from a community (more than 30 minutes from the Health Centre or School). Land Trips may involve travel on water or ice, overnight camping or the exposure of students to the uncertainties of nature. As such, these activities often entail more risk and demand attention to planning, information sharing and safety measures to mitigate these risks including increased supervisor-to-student ratios.

Negligence: A situation where a teacher, staff member or non-teacher adult fails to meet a standard of care expected. Where an educator is identified as being negligent it is most likely because he or she failed to:

- Properly instruct;
- Provide adequate supervision;
- Use proper equipment or ensure the safety of equipment;
- Obtain informed consent from the parent/student.

Parental permission: The written authorization of parents or guardians for minors to participate in an Excursion or Land Trip.

Risk Assessment: A written form to help create awareness of foreseeable and potential risks with documented control strategies. A new risk assessment must be completed any time that there are changes in the conditions or environment in which an activity takes place to ensure that considerations has been given to those changes and appropriate strategies are implemented to control or eliminate the risk.

Service Provider: An external party hired to facilitate, supervise or lead activities during an Excursion or Land Trip.

LIST OF AUTHORITATIVE DOCUMENTS:

- Education Act;
- Motor Vehicles Act;
- Canada Shipping Act;
- *Education Framework: Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit for Nunavut Curriculum;*
- *Foundation for Dynamic Assessment: Iilitaunnikuliriniq As Learning in Nunavut Schools;*
- Nunavut Safety Act;
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy;
- Nunavut Public Service Code of Values and Ethics;
- Safety in Schools: Principal's Planning Manual;
- *Crisis Response Guidelines for Nunavut Schools Staff Manual;*
- NEU Collective Agreement;
- NTA Collective Agreement; and
- All other applicable legislation.

PRINCIPLES

The policy is based on the following principles:

- All Excursions and Land Trips are educational, curriculum based and school directed;
- The health and safety of students, staff and volunteers are a paramount component of any Excursion and Land Trip organized within the school context;
- All Excursions and Land Trips are carried out in accordance with the values, knowledge, beliefs and cultural distinctiveness of the people of Nunavut; and
- All Excursions and Land Trips are inclusive, and reasonable efforts are made to ensure the accommodation and participation of all students on Excursions and Land Trips. Meeting the requirements of this principle includes the appropriate selection of venues, activities, supports and accommodations.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Deputy Minister: Approves all international excursions proposals. The Deputy Minister may consider recommendations from the DEA but retains the right to approve or deny international excursion proposals .

DEA: Approves excursions proposals conducted in Nunavut and Canada, following the recommendation of the Principal. The DEA recommends international excursions proposals to the Deputy Minister for approval.

Principal: The Principal ensures that the Teacher-in-Charge has completed all steps necessary and is prepared for the Excursions and Land Trips. The Principal approves Land Trips and recommends Excursion proposals to the DEA for approval.

Teacher-in-Charge: The Teacher-in-Charge must be a certified teacher from the school involved in the excursion and serves as the leader of the excursion and on land trip. The Teacher-in-Charge must ensure all reasonable steps are taken to foresee the potential for injuries and areas of danger in the itinerary of the excursion and land trip. He takes precautions to minimize and mitigate the risks to excursion participants.

Deputy Supervisor: The Deputy Supervisor is designated by the Teacher-in-Charge and is required on all excursions and land trips. The Deputy Supervisor may be a Non-teacher Adult.

Parent/Guardian: The parent and/or guardian must provide parental permission for minors to participate in the excursion and on land trip.

Non-teacher Adult: Adults, who are not teachers or students themselves but who possess the appropriate experience, competencies and qualifications may be supervisors. Before being permitted to be part of the supervision team, the Principal will take into account the health status, skills and experiences of the non-teacher adult as well as the characteristics of the student group at the time of selection. It is mandatory that non-teacher adults provide a clear and current (within the last six months prior to the Excursion or Land Trip) Criminal Record Check (CRC) and Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) to the Principal prior to the excursion or on land trip.

PROVISIONS OF THE POLICY

The following timelines need to be taken into account for **international Excursions:**

- Excursion initiation preparation forms must be submitted no less than **six months (180 days) before the departure date;**
 - Excursion Pre-approval
 - Risk Assessment

- Planning preparations forms must be finalized (copy provided to the Principal or Principal designate) no less than **three months (90 days) before the departure date**;
 - Emergency Action Plan form;
 - Contingency Plan form;
 - Health, Medical and Special Considerations form;
 - Southern Travel Authorization form.

- Approved Excursion forms must finalized (copy provided to the Principal or Principal designate) at least **45 days before the departure date**;
 - Approved Student Excursion form
 - Parental Acknowledgement form;
 - Volunteer or Employee Participation form;
 - Assumption of Risk form;
 - Consent to Photograph/Videotape/Audiotape form (if applicable); and
 - Consent for Emergency Medical Services form.

*The following timelines need to be taken into account for **local, regional and territorial Excursions**:*

- Trip initiation preparations must be submitted no less than **three months (90 days) before the departure date**;
 - Excursion Pre-approval form;
 - Risk Assessment form.

- Planning preparations must be finalized (copy provided to the Principal or Principal designate) no less than **one months (30 days) before the departure date**;
 - Emergency Action Plan form;
 - Contingency Plan form;
 - Health, Medical and Special Considerations form;
 - Southern Travel Authorization form (if required).

- Approved Excursion forms must be finalized (copy provided to the Principal or Principal designate) no less than **14 days before the departure date**.
 - Approved Student Excursion form;

- Parental Acknowledgement form;
- Volunteer or Employee Participation form;
- Assumption of Risk form;
- Consent to Photograph/Videotape/Audiotape form (if applicable);
- Consent for Emergency Medical Services form.

*The following aspects and timelines need to be taken into account for **overnight Land Trips:***

- Trip initiation preparations forms must be submitted no less than **three months (90 days) before the departure date;**
 - Land Trip Pre-approval form; and
 - Risk Assessment form.
- Planning preparations forms must be finalized (copy provided to the Principal or Principal designate) no less than **30 days before the departure date;**
 - Emergency Action Plan form;
 - Contingency Plan form; and
 - Health, Medical and Special Considerations form.
- Approved Land Trip forms must be finalized (copy provided to the Principal or Principal Designate) no less than **14 days before the departure date.**
 - Approved Student Land Trip form;
 - Parental Acknowledgement form;
 - Volunteer or Employee Participation form;
 - Assumption of Risk form;
 - DEA Firearm Proficiency Recommendation form (if applicable);
 - Consent to Photograph/Videotape/Audiotape form (if applicable); and
 - Consent for Emergency Medical Services form.
- Given the nature of Land Trips, preparation **timelines will necessarily be more flexible** depending on weather and any other unforeseen events. The Principal or DEA will make the right decision taking in account, health and safety of students and all other participants.

The following aspects and timelines need to be taken into account for **day Land Trips**:

- Trip initiation preparations forms must be submitted no less than **one months (30 days) before the departure date**;
 - Land Trip Pre-approval form; and
 - Risk Assessment form.
- Planning preparations forms must be finalized (copy provided to the Principal or Principal designate) no less than **14 days before the departure date**;
 - Emergency Action Plan form;
 - Contingency Plan form; and
 - Health, Medical and Special Considerations form.
- Approved Land Trip forms must be finalized (copy provided to the Principal or Principal Designate) no less than **7 days before the departure date**.
 - Approved Student Land Trip form;
 - Parental Acknowledgement form;
 - Volunteer or Employee Participation form;
 - Assumption of Risk form;
 - DEA Firearm Proficiency Recommendation form (if applicable);
 - Consent to Photograph/Videotape/Audiotape form (if applicable); and
 - Consent for Emergency Medical Services form.
- Given the nature of Land Trips, preparation **timelines will necessarily be more flexible** depending on weather and any other unforeseen events. The Principal or DEA will make the right decision taking in account, health and safety of students and all other participants.

The following aspects need to be taken into account for **all Excursions and Land Trips**:

- Each Excursion or Land Trip must have one designated leader, the Teacher-in-Charge, and a designated Deputy Supervisor. The Deputy Supervisor is another member of the supervisory team. They may be a non-Teacher adult;
- A clear written plan for the Excursion or Land Trip must be prepared and issued to all members of the supervisory team. The plan should contain information and

directions about the duties, roles, responsibilities and expectations of all those working in a supervisory capacity;

- All reasonable efforts must be made to accommodate the participation of all students in a class in an Excursion or Land Trip, including the selection of transportation, venues and activities;
- The Principal, DEA or Deputy Minister may cancel an Excursion or Land Trip at any time, if the level of preparation is deemed insufficient;
- Any changes made to the Excursion or Land Trip after the planning stages must be approved by Regional School Operations. This includes but is not limited to changes in the Teacher-in-Charge, destination, outfitter being used, or any other significant component in the planning.
- A code of conduct, formulated by the DEA, Principal or Teacher-in-Charge, should be signed by all participants of the Excursion or Land Trip, including non-teacher adults;
- Fundraising activities, organized to finance the Excursion or Land Trip, should be authorized by the Principal or the DEA. These funds must be reported to the DEA and included in their audit;
- Principals may exclude a student from an Excursion or Land Trip on the grounds of behaviour, risk to others or risk to themselves;
- Only in exceptional cases will staff, parents and/or guardians and friends be allowed to provide transportation and approval will only be given to those persons with a current licence, child protection clearance, a good driving record, correct vehicle registration and insurance. This must be identified and approved in the planning Detailed Program Plan for Participants;
- Staff should not receive any extra remuneration related to an Excursion or Land Trip, except for pre-approved costs and expenses.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- A risk assessment must be completed for each planned activity to demonstrate safety with respect to activities and location. The risk assessment plan should be completed and signed by the Teacher-in-Charge. Foreseeable and potential risks with documented control strategies must be provided.

INSURANCE LIABILITY

- Insurance must cover: medical, accident, lost wallets, third party liability and cancellation documentation;
- The service provider is required to provide a copy of the relevant insurance coverage for the records of the school (Teacher-in-Charge, Principal and/or

DEA). If the provider does not furnish a copy of the relevant insurance coverage, it cannot be hired by the school as a service provider.

COSTS

- Principals must be aware of the impact of an Excursion or Land Trip on the finances of a family or adult student;
- Excursion or Land Trip costs must be affordable and reasonable for all families. Principals and DEAs should review the level of cost estimated for the Excursion or Land Trip;
- Under supervision of the DEA or Principals, Excursion or Land Trip may be financed through fundraising activities;
- Student participation costs must not be increased to cover the costs of teachers, organizers or other adults, without the written permission of the parents of participating students or adult students.

PARENT AND/OR GUARDIAN

- Parents and/or guardians may be part of the Excursion or Land Trip planning process;
- Parents and/or guardians must be notified in writing of the:
 - Reasons and objectives of the excursion;
 - Details and the desired outcomes for the excursion;
 - Full itinerary, travel and transport plans;
 - Hygiene and health requirements;
 - Clothing requirements;
 - Cost; and
 - Planned supervision.

The following aspects need to be taken into account in preparation, planning and during the excursion:

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Every Excursion or Land Trip must have a minimum of two (2) first aid providers, except in cases where the *Safety Regulations (Nunavut) indicate a requirement for additional first aid providers and/or increased qualifications for first aid providers*. First aid providers must possess:
 - Current knowledge in basic First Aid and emergency care procedures; and
 - Certification in Level I First Aid and CPR.

- For excursions and land trips where phone service is available, at least two mobile phones must be carried by the supervisory team. Phones numbers are to be carried by all students during the excursion or land trip and shared with Parents or guardians;
- A Satellite phone and SPOT device or equivalent must be taken on Land Trips by the supervisory team;
- A minimum of one first aid kit, with contents in accordance with the *Safety Regulations (Nunavut)* kit must be available for the Excursion or Land Trip team. As required, in accordance with the *Safety Regulations (Nunavut)*, additional first aid kits must be available in consideration of the number of participants and the distance to the nearest medical facility;
- In emergency situations, the Teacher-in-Charge or Deputy Supervisor of the Excursion or Land Trip can authorize medical treatment in the event that teachers are unable to contact the parents or guardians of a sick or injured student; and
- Swimming activities will not be permitted other than in pools or areas administered by public institutions subject to government safety regulations. A certified lifeguard must be on duty.

SUPERVISION

- The ratio of teachers and supervisors to students for an Excursion or Land Trip will depend on the teacher’s risk assessment. For activities with higher levels of risk such as swimming, canoeing or kayaking, the level of potential risk may be lowered by increasing the number of qualified supervisors;
- The students must be adequately supervised at all times;
- Consumption of alcohol, cannabis and non-prescription drugs by any participant, including members of the supervisory team, is prohibited during an excursion or land trip.
- With the exception of short walking excursions, in addition to the Teacher-in-Charge, all excursions and land trips must meet the minimum supervisor to student ratios:

Grade Level	Ratio
Kindergarten	1:6
Primary (Grades 1-3)	1:10
Junior (Grades 4-6)	1:15

Intermediate (Grades 7-10)	1:20
Senior (Grades 11 and 12)	1:25

INTERNATIONAL TRIPS

- Given the increased risks inherent in international travel there is a greater need to determine an educational purpose for the excursion and to conduct an extensive risk management process. The website of Global Affairs Canada is to be visited. Only countries identified as requiring “normal security precautions” may be chosen as a destination;
- Passports and visas must be current - copies should be held at the school and checked to ensure expiration does not occur within six months of the trip;
- International trips happen during school vacation.

The following aspects need to be taken into account after the excursion:

EVALUATION

- There must be a Post-Excursion or a Post-Land Trip evaluation by the DEA, Teacher-in-Charge, students and parents or guardians of the following:
 - summary of the dates and main events,
 - positive and negative aspects,
 - areas for improvement;
 - whether outcomes and objectives were achieved;
 - cultural relevance;
 - experiences and benefits; and
 - General comments.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The Department of Education Excursions policy and on lands policy is maintained and funded through the department’s existing budget appropriation. Excursions and Land Trips may be funded through fundraising.

PREROGATIVE OF CABINET

Nothing in this policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Executive Council to make decisions or take action respecting the provisions of the policy.

SUNSET CLAUSE

This policy shall be in effect from the date of the signature until September 30, 2020.

Premier

Date