



Edge School

POLICY TITLE:

Safety for Outdoor Education and Field Trips

Board Approval: December 21, 2012

LEGAL REFERENCE:

Youthsafe Outdoors Off-site Experience Safety Manual
Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools

RATIONALE:

The School recognizes that providing students field experience is integral to an authentic and balanced program. Educational field trips and outdoor education excursions are an important part of the inquiry process; students are able to connect their learning to the world outside of the school and more fully understand their impact on the environment and society.

POLICY:

The School supports engagement in educational field trips and outdoor education excursions by students, classes, or other school groups during and/or outside of school hours when such excursions have educational value and are an integral part of the school program.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions

In this policy,

- a) “staff member-in-charge” means the Edge School staff member responsible for the planning, coordination, implementation, and supervision of the off-site activity.
- b) “supervisor” means a teacher, staff member, or volunteer who is responsible for assisting the staff member-in-charge during off-site activities;

PART 1 GENERAL

Purpose

- 1 The purpose of off-site activities is to enable students to participate in quality off-site educational experiences that:
 - a) Are at the heart of the educational process;
 - b) Are connected to the Edge School Policies, Guide to Education, the Program of Studies, curriculum and learning outcomes, and

- c) Are relevant, flexible, responsive, and accessible.
- 2 Off-site activities must demonstrate they key understandings that:
 - a) Learning requires purposeful involvement
 - b) Interpersonal relationships are essential to the leaning process
 - c) Knowledge is constructed within a climate of inquiry
 - d) Clear expectations and relevant feedback are needed, and that
 - e) Diversity is valued within a responsive environment
- 3 Off-site activities must take place within a context of
 - a) The safety and security of students, staff, volunteers and Edge School
 - b) Appropriate planning to manage the risks
- 4 Edge School Administration must ensure that students travelling off-site are in “good standing” at the School

PART 2 TRIP PLANNING AND APPROVAL

Staff member-in-charge

- 1 The staff member-in-charge is responsible for initiating, planning and supervising an off-site activity trip.
- 2 The staff member-in-charge must
 - a) be familiar with the seasonal conditions at the time of the trip.
 - b) have the training and knowledge appropriate for leading the trip.
 - c) comply with all Edge School policies and procedures.
 - d) 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.
 - e) use service providers whose staff have additional qualifications, training and experience when appropriate or as directed.
 - f) ensure that the appropriate trip documentation required by the School.
 - Is filed with the Principal
 - Accompanies the staff member-in-charge and other trip supervisors
 - g) be aware of students with health conditions and ensure that:
 - Appropriate medication accompanies the student, and that
 - An emergency response protocol is in place.
 - h) prior to and during off-site activities, advise students, staff and volunteers
 - regarding their responsibilities and requirements.
 - trip hazards.
 - appropriate safety procedures.
 - appropriate selection and use of equipment.
 - i) ensure that a precise attendance count is taken at all points of departure on an off-site activity and at regular intervals during the off-site activity.

- j) ensure that vehicles do not return from an off-site activity unless transportation has been arranged for all participants to return from the school to their homes.
 - k) ensure that the parent permission process is completed and that a parent meeting is held for all overnight trips.
- 3 The staff member-in-charge may shorten, cancel or terminate an off-site activity at any time if, in the opinion of the staff member-in-charge, the off-site activity cannot proceed or be completed in a safe or satisfactory manner.

Trip Approval

No off-site activity may proceed unless it has received the appropriate approval.

Approval by the CEO and Principal

The CEO and Principal may refer any off-site to the Board of Directors.

Before approving an off-site activity, the CEO and Principal must ensure that

- a) all elements of this regulation are implemented and that trips are approved only if the applicable procedures and guidelines are followed;
- b) the staff member-in-charge understands the Edge School regulations and procedures as they pertain to off-site activities;
- c) the students, teachers, staff, volunteers and parent or guardians will receive the appropriate information about the trip and their roles and responsibilities; and
- d) arrangements are in place for covering all the financial matters, including a refund procedure, if any refunds are available, a contingency fund, and an accounting for all expenditures.

When an off-site activity includes students from another school,

- a) the principal of each school involved must approve the participation of their students, and
- b) students from all schools are accountable to the staff member-in-charge and all supervisors.

PART 3 TRIP CONDUCT

Supervision

1. The minimum acceptable standard of supervision for all off-site activities is one adult to 15 students.
2. The staff member-in-charge and supervisors are required to
 - a) exercise supervision on a full-time basis, and
 - b) take whatever precautions are necessary to ensure the proper conduct, appropriate behavior and safety of students

Transportation

1. When transportation is initiated or organized by the School, a student with a valid operator's class 5 license may drive to and from any off-site activity within the city of Calgary only if written permission from the parent or guardian acknowledging that the student will be driving to the off-site activity is filed with the trip documentation at the School.
2. When transportation is initiated or organized by the school, a student with a valid operator's class 5 license may drive other students as passengers, within the city of Calgary only if
 - a) the student who is driving has completed the Volunteer Driver Authorization form and process; and
 - b) written permission from the student driver's parent or guardian acknowledging that they understand that their student will be transporting other students is filed with the trip documentation at the school; and
 - c) written permission from the parent or guardian of all student passengers acknowledging that they consent and understand that their student will be transported by another student driver is filed with the trip documentation at the school
3. Staff members-in-charge will use Edge buses and/or vans as a first choice for transportation

Weather and driving conditions

1. Before students leave Calgary for an off-site activity trip, the staff member-in-charge must ensure that weather and road conditions are conducive to travel for the entire route.
2. On return trips, the staff member-in-charge must
 - a) verify weather and road conditions before students return, and
 - b) consult with the School administration if necessary

Accidents

1. If an accident occurs during an off-site activity, the staff member-in-charge must
 - a) Ensure the safety of all Edge School participants

- b) contact the CEO and Principal
- c) Complete a Student/Teacher accident report within 48 hours of the incident, or as soon as possible upon return to the school, and submit it the CEO, who must forward it to Insurance.

Alcohol and drug use

1. The use of alcohol or illegal drugs by any Edge School participants is strictly prohibited during off site activities and applies to all off site activities regardless of the circumstances, the age of the Edge School participants or local laws, customs and culture.
2. In this section, Edge School participant means a student, a volunteer, a teacher or another Edge School staff member who travels on the off-site activity.

PART 4 PARENTS/GUARDIANS, STUDENT AND VOLUNTEERS

Parent Permission

1. The staff member in charge must
 - a) Provide the parent or guardian with written information regarding the off-site activity and the hazards and hazard mitigation.
 - b) Obtain the consent of the parent or guardian on an Edge School Acknowledgement of Risk form.
2. A parent meeting may be held for off site activities.
3. When a parent meeting has been called for an off-site activity,
 - a) the staff member in charge must keep a record of attendance at the parent meeting
 - b) the student's parent or guardian must attend the parent meeting to discuss the off-site activity trip and the student's responsibility related to the rules, expectations and conduct expected of students.
 - c) If the students parent or guardian does not attend the parent meeting, the staff member in charge must personally speak to the parent or guardian about the trip and the student's responsibilities.
 - d) Volunteers are expected to attend and if the volunteer is unable to attend , the staff member in charge must personally speak to the volunteer about the trip and the volunteer's responsibilities.



Student Responsibility

1. Each student participating in an off-site activity must
 - a) comply with the School's expectation for students and the student code of conduct
 - b) account to the staff member in charge and all supervisors for their conduct
 - c) cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the School to provide education programs and other services
 - d) fulfill all the preparatory requirements at an appropriate level of performance
 - e) dress appropriately according to the type of off-site activity
 - f) participate in a responsible and cooperative manner during the trip
 - g) carry out all follow-up procedures in an appropriate manner

Volunteers

1. Volunteers on an off-site activity
 - a) receive direction from and are accountable to the staff member in charge
2. Volunteers on an off-site activity must
 - a) support and follow the school code of conduct
 - b) report any inappropriate conduct to the staff member in charge
 - c) adhere to the schedule or itinerary
 - d) dress appropriately according to the type of off-site activity
 - e) fulfill their duties for the duration of the off-site activity, including evenings and weekends
 - f) attend parent meetings and/or pre-trip meetings as required, and
 - g) be appropriately identified during the trip

PART 5 ACTIVITIES

Unacceptable activities

1. The following off-site activities are not permitted
 - a) off-site activities that require travel time that would be too long for the age of the students involved
 - b) off-site activities where safety measures have been deliberately removed; or
 - c) off-site activities that are prohibited activities

2. Active participation in the following activities is not permitted as a Edge School activity
 - a) aerial gymnastics
 - b) American gladiator style events
 - c) Auto racing
 - d) Bicycle motocross (BMX)
 - e) Boxing or kick boxing
 - f) Bungee jumping
 - g) Caving (spelunking)
 - h) Demolition derbies
 - i) Drag racing
 - j) Extreme sports
 - k) Hang gliding, paragliding, parachuting, sky diving
 - l) Horse jumping
 - m) Hot air balloon rides (tethered and untethered)
 - n) Ice climbing
 - o) Mechanical bull riding or other mechanical rodeo events
 - p) Motorcycling of any nature
 - q) Operation and racing of motorized watercraft
 - r) Paintball
 - s) Activities using firearms, including winter biathlon
 - t) Rodeos
 - u) Tobogganing, tubing, crazy carpeting, bobsledding and sledding\
 - v) Trampolining , and
 - w) Any other activities identified by the School as being not acceptable.

Other activities such as off-site activities in remote or wilderness areas, water activities, swimming and skiing, are permitted as long as they meet the conditions and requirements of the School.