

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TRIPS

Background

1. The district believes that International Educational Trips for students can be of value to students. The district, however, believes that they are not a right of any student, class or group. For the purposes of this Administrative Procedure, an International Educational Trip is an out of school activity in which students travel outside of Canada and the United States of America.
2. The district endorses in principle International Educational Trips for students during school time provided:
 - a. advantage is taken whenever possible of weekends and holiday periods.
 - b. the trip has curricular or extra-curricular relevance for participating students.
 - c. the trip is initiated by school staff and approved by the Principal, Assistant Superintendent and the District Leadership Team.
 - d. the trip is appropriately supervised.
 - e. that all financial transactions associated with the trip meet school district requirements.
3. Applications for International Educational Trips may be limited or restricted based on local or global circumstances. The Superintendent of Schools, or designate, will convey the terms of the limits or restrictions to school principals, as required.

Guiding Principles

1. It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the appropriateness of all International Educational Trips and the planning for safety of students.
2. All trip proposals will be brought forward to the attention of the District Leadership Team for discussion. The Assistant Superintendent for the school has the responsibility to approve proposed International Educational Trips.
3. International Educational Trips, offered through the school or school district, must be under the general supervision of school district staff. Planning and supervision for the trip are the shared responsibility of the Principal and the sponsor teacher.
4. The safety and welfare of students and staff is the primary consideration in planning and implementing International Educational Trips. The supervisors of each such trip must incorporate appropriate safety practices that consider factors such as the location to which the students are travelling, the nature of the activity in which the students are participating, the skill level of the students, the number of students and the age and development of the students.
5. Parents and guardians must provide informed consent for their child's participation in the International Educational Trip, including informed consent for activities undertaken on that trip. Parents and guardians must be provided with all appropriate information regarding the date, location, arrangements, level of supervision and known inherent risks specific to the trip in order to give informed consent.

6. Volunteer supervisors are a valued resource in the school community and during International Educational Trips. Volunteers will take direction from the sponsor teacher or Principal. Volunteers must provide background references and Criminal Record Checks and may be required to provide a Driver's Abstract. (Refer to AP 255: Volunteer Drivers and the Use of Privately Owned Vehicles).
7. All International Educational Trips must be planned to ensure that changes in travel plans, on short notice, to ensure the safety of students are possible without significant costs to participating students and/or their parents/guardians. Travel insurance plans and/or alternate destination plans are essential to International Educational Trips proposals.
8. At all times the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal substances by student participants, volunteers, supervisors or staff is strictly prohibited during International Educational Trips, regardless of the circumstances, the age of the participants, or local laws, customs and culture.

Procedures

1. Application for Approval Conditions of Participation
 - 1.1 A sponsor teacher proposing an International Educational Trip must submit an application to the Principal and Assistant Superintendent for approval prior to any communication to students or parents about the proposed trip.
 - 1.2 Once approval is obtained from the Principal, Assistant Superintendent and District Leadership Team, the sponsor teacher may communicate the proposed International Educational Trip to parents and students.
 - 1.3 For International Educational Trips, approval from the District Leadership Team must be obtained at least six months prior to departure. Exceptions to this include championships and challenges which teams and clubs may qualify for.
 - 1.4 An application for a proposed International Educational Trip submitted by a sponsor teacher must:
 - a. demonstrate the curricular or extra-curricular relevance of the proposed trip and that it is appropriate for the proposed group of student participants.
 - b. include a supervision plan appropriate to the nature of the trip, the age and the development of the students, and the activities being undertaken.
 - c. provide details of any fundraising activities to be undertaken in support of the proposed trip.
 - d. provide a plan for any special training necessary for participation in the International Educational Trip.
 - 1.5 In considering whether to approve an International Educational Trip, the Principal, Assistant Superintendent and District Leadership Team will consider all relevant facts and in particular, will consider:
 - a. the substantive educational rationale for the proposed trip.
 - b. the reasonableness of the length of the proposed trip, having regard to the number of school days that will be used and the age of the students.
 - c. the risks associated with the trip and whether the application for approval provides an appropriate safety management plan.
 - d. the destination and the risks of travel to that destination **(the Principal and Assistant Superintendent will not approve travel to a destination where the Department of Foreign Affairs has published a travel warning which indicates "avoid non-essential travel" or "avoid all travel")**.

- e. the activities to be undertaken on the trip.
- f. the affordability of the proposed trip for its intended participants.
- g. how the proposed trip co-ordinates with overall school plans.
- h. contingency and emergency planning included in the application.
- i. the impact of the absence of attending school staff from the school.
- j. the supervision plan.

- 1.6 Students are not permitted to participate in field trips where the service providers require a waiver to be signed as a condition of participation in the event or activity. Acknowledgement of Risk forms may be used by service providers to gather informed consent from parents by indicating the risks associated with the field trip activity. Acknowledgement of Risk forms must accompany the initial application for the International Educational Trip (Form 254-1).

2. Conditions of Participation

- 2.1 Any School District (No. 43) Coquitlam student in good standing is eligible to take part in an International Educational Trip, subject to the criteria and guidelines of the trip. Students who participate in a trip must be currently enrolled in a relevant course or program at their school or be a member of a team sponsored by the teacher undertaking the planning of the trip.
- 2.2 Participation in an International Educational Trip is not a right. The Principal may determine whether a student may participate in a trip. Non-participation in a trip will not affect a student's standing or grade. An appropriate educational program must be provided to students not participating in the International Educational Trip.
- 2.3 All participants on an International Educational Trip must comply with the school and district Student Code of Conduct, abide by all laws and customs of the destination, and act as ambassador of the school district. When behaviour of a student on a trip, in the opinion of the sponsor teacher, compromises safety of self or others and does not adhere to previously established expectations, that student will be returned home at the expense of the parents/guardians. If it is necessary for the student to be accompanied by a supervisor on the return trip, the parents/guardians of the student will be responsible for the travel costs of that supervisor. Parents will be advised of this possibility as part of the trip conditions. Prior to the student being sent home, parents will be notified.
- 2.4 Student participants in an International Educational Trip must attend pre-trip meetings at which the activities to be undertaken on the trip, the risks associated with the trip, and the expected standards of conduct and consequences of non-compliance with that standard of conduct are reviewed and agreed to. Student participants must satisfy any academic responsibilities prior to and during an Out of Province Educational Trip.
- 2.5 A sponsor teacher must provide detailed information to the parents/guardians of proposed student participants outlining the proposed activities to be undertaken on the International Educational Trip, including any known risks or dangers associated with that trip, the educational purpose behind the trip, the supervision to be provided, and must obtain informed parental consent for each student participating in the trip. The sponsor teacher will also communicate to parents/guardians the responsibilities and expectations of student and adult participants and the consequences of failure to comply with the expected standards of conduct. A pre-trip meeting must be held to provide parents information about the trip, and parental attendance must be documented.

- 2.6 Cancellation insurance or an alternate destination plan must be in place for the field trip. For reasons of student safety, an International Educational Trip may need to be changed, postponed, or cancelled. The cost for such a decision will not be covered by the school district.
- 2.7 Should the school or school district require the field trip to change or return home, all field trip participants will be required to comply with this directive.

3. Volunteers and Supervision

- 3.1 At least one of the volunteer supervisors, the sponsor teacher or a trip director must have knowledge of the customs and culture of the region, province or state being visited.
- 3.2 The minimum adult/student ratio for all trips is 1 to 10.
- 3.3 Staff and volunteer supervisors must be available to respond to the supervisory needs of the student twenty-four hours a day for each day of the event. All participants travelling on an International Educational Trip must be in the role of supervisor or student. This includes all attending staff's spouses. Staff and volunteer supervisor's children are not permitted on the trip unless they are legitimately part of the curricular or extra-curricular program. In the case of extra-curricular trips where students' family members wish to be present to encourage the team, all travellers organized through the auspices of the school/school district must comply with the guiding principles and conditions of participation.
- 3.4 Volunteer supervisors must be informed of their responsibilities in writing. Volunteer supervisors must be screened for suitability and advised of the expectations of their role as outlined by Administrative Procedure 495 School Volunteers. The Principal will approve the participation of each volunteer supervisor. Volunteer supervisors must have the appropriate skills and knowledge to participate in the field trip. It is required that a meeting of the sponsor teacher, volunteer supervisors and the Principal is held to review the expectations and standard of conduct expected of volunteer supervisors on the International Educational Trip.
- 3.5 Any CUPE employee who attends and is outside of their classification is considered to be a volunteer therefore they will not receive pay for the activity.

4. Financial Arrangements

- 4.1 Fundraising activities to support an International Educational Trip must comply with school district procedures and be approved by the Principal (refer to Administrative Procedure 197: Fundraising Activities Sponsored by Schools).

- 4.2 All financing arrangements for an International Educational Trip must be transparent, including the use of any “free” or discounted tickets associated with the selection of an organizing company, or the accrual of travel rewards benefits such as Air Miles related to the group travel. Sponsor teachers shall not place themselves in a financially compromising position or a conflict of interest with their students or with commercial agencies as a result of trips. (For further information, refer to AP 406: Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Employees). A summary of costs associated with the trip shall be completed by the sponsor teacher and submitted to the Principal within two weeks of the completion of the field trip.
- 4.3 International Educational Trips are assumed by the teacher and any supervisor on a voluntary basis. There shall be no compensation for the provision of extra-curricular activities (Article D10 in the CTA collective agreement: Extra-Curricular Activities).
- 4.4 If a teacher on call is required as a result of the International Educational Trip, the cost of the teacher on call will be included in the students’ cost of the trip.
- 4.5 The school district will not be responsible for the costs of any International Educational Trip. Parents/guardians must be advised before any funds are collected from parents or students, in writing, that should the travel have to be cancelled for any reason the school district is not responsible for any costs incurred.

5. Pre-Trip Review

- 5.1 Not less than one month prior to departure on an Out of Province Educational Trip, the sponsor teacher will meet with the Principal to review and revise, as appropriate:
 - a. the critical incident plan to deal with health, financial or discipline emergencies, that includes a telephone tree and arrangements for two-way communication.
 - b. the supervision plan.
 - c. the list of student participants and volunteers.
 - d. the detailed itinerary.
 - e. the general state of readiness and preparedness for the trip.

6. Documentation

- 6.1 Prior to embarking upon the International Educational Trip, the sponsor teacher will provide the school administration a copy of all relevant documents for the trip (the “Trip File”), and specifically:
 - a. a list of all participants and volunteers, with medical and emergency contact information.
 - b. a copy of the informed consent form signed by the parent/guardian of each participating student.
 - c. a detailed itinerary, including transportation arrangements, accommodation, activities, with contact numbers and addresses.
 - d. emergency contact numbers for sponsor teacher and supervisors.
 - e. a copy of each student’s valid passport and, if necessary, travel visa.
 - f. information about travel insurance and alternate destination planning.
- 6.2 A copy of the Trip File will be kept by the Principal and provided to the Assistant Superintendent at least one week prior to the departure of the trip.

7. Health and Safety

- 7.1 All participants on an International Educational Trip, including students, volunteers and the sponsor teacher must provide confirmation of adequate health and hospital insurance coverage prior to departure.
- 7.2 All participants on an International Educational Trip must provide the sponsor teacher with information concerning any known medical or health condition that may require emergency attention on the trip.
- 7.3 The sponsor teacher must carry with them on the trip a copy of the relevant health information for students, including emergency contact information for parents/guardians and school district administration.

References: F250-1 Parent/Guardian Field Trip Information and Consent Form
F250-2 Parent/Guardian Extra-Curricular Field Trip Information and Consent Form
F250-3 Student Vehicle Assignment
F250-4 Teacher Field Trip Checklist
F254-1 International Educational Trips Preliminary Application
F254-2 International Educational Trips Planning Update
F254-3 International Educational Trips File Final Checklist
AP 240 Charges for Course Fees/Activities/Materials
AP 250 Field Trips
AP 251 Non-Teaching (CUPE) Staff Participating in Off-Site Activities Involving Students
AP 252 Out of Province Educational Trips
AP 253 Student Exchange, Sister School or Humanitarian Programs
AP 255 Volunteer Drivers and the use of Privately Owned Vehicles
AP 257 Approved Vehicles for Conveying Students
AP 495 School Volunteers

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