



AP 2 – 24 Exchange Program Approval and Planning

Related Policies:	Initial Approval: 2018 March 14
Related Procedures:	Last Amended: 2021 September 17
Exhibits: Exhibit 2-24.1 Exchange Program Approval Form Exhibit 2-24.2 Exchange Program Application Exhibit 2-24.3 Exchange Program Acknowledgement of Risk and Informed Consent Form Exhibit 2-24.4 Exchange Program Medical Information and Medication Administration and Release Form Exhibit 2-24.5 Exchange Program Medical Administration Log	Last Reviewed: 2019 November 26

PURPOSE

To ensure exchange programs provide a safe educational experience.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to principals and the Superintendent when approving exchange programs.

DEFINITIONS

Category 1 Exchange Program - involve Canadian destinations outside Alberta. Kindergarten to Grade 8 school students are not normally eligible to participate in Category 1 program. Superintendent approval is required for category 1 exchange programs.

Category 2 Exchange Program - involve destinations both outside of Canada. Kindergarten to Grade 8 school students are not normally eligible to participate in Category 2 programs. Superintendent approval is required for category 2 exchange programs.

Exchange Program – An exchange program is a program in which students from grades 9-12 travel and learn abroad with a partner school. A student exchange program may involve international travel, but does not necessarily require the travel outside of Canada. Exchange programs are not considered field trips. They differ from field trips and include the following:

1. There is a significant classroom study component associated with the program at the destination
2. There is a significant pre-work is required as part of the program
3. There is a significant post-work is required as part of the program
4. Involves a selection process for participants
5. It involves at least one other school or educational institution
6. Involves up to 14 days travel
7. Travel to traditional tourist locations at the location of the program is not a significant part of the program
8. Provides benefit to the school and Division
9. There is a significant learning component for both students and staff which will be presented to the Board
10. Travel of longer than 14 days as considered long-term exchanges and are not covered under this administrative procedure. Long-term exchanges are arranged by the individual student and their families and are not considered or approved by the Board.

Exchange Program Leader – the certificated teacher employed by the Division or a volunteer approved by the Superintendent.

Prohibited Activities - The following trip activities are considered high risk and are **prohibited**:

1. Aviation or aircraft related activity activities eg: aircraft or helicopter rides from school property
2. Hot air balloon rides
3. Parasailing
4. Skydiving
5. Excursions requiring the use of non-commercial aircraft, eg: private planes
6. Automobile activities eg: demolition derbies, auto races
7. Excursions to areas that have recently experienced or are likely to experience a natural disaster such as earthquakes, floods, hurricane, tornado zones
8. Excursions to war zones (imminent or existing)
9. Excursions to regions with political or civil instability
10. Dunk tanks
11. Mechanical Bulls
12. Diving into or sliding on foam, mud, ice or snow
13. Demolition of derelict vehicles, equipment or buildings
14. Ice climbing/mountain climbing
15. Use of fireworks or other pyrotechnic devices
16. Use of air filled "Fun Structures"
17. Bungee jumping.

High Risk Activity – the following activities are considered high risk and are not for every grade or student. These activities require special attention, as outlined in the procedure.

- Archery
- Cliff rappelling and rappelling towers
- Climbing walls
- Downhill skiing
- Firing ranges
- Gymnastics
- Ice skating
- Ice hockey
- In-Line skating
- Mountain biking
- Paintball warfare games
- Scuba diving
- Skateboarding
- Snow blading
- Tackle football
- Tobogganing
- Whitewater rafting
- Kayaking
- Winter camping

PROCEDURES

General

1. Approval to embark on an exchange program shall only be granted, if the Superintendent is convinced that:
 - 1.1 That the experience will provide educational benefit to the students
 - 1.2 Students and staff will be safe at all times during the exchange program
 - 1.3 The exchange program does not include any Prohibited Activities

- 1.4 There is adequate safety planning for high risk activities
 - 1.5 That there are plans to deal with emergencies
 - 1.6 That parents have given informed consent
 - 1.7 That the timing of the exchange program has a minimum negative impact on the student's regular educational program.
 - 1.8 The Exchange Program Leader has met the requirements outlined in in this administrative procedure.
2. Each exchange program will be reviewed and considered independently on its own merits based on a number of factors including global issues, weather, social and economic issues of the area and neighbouring areas, participants' age, maturity, critical thinking and problem solving abilities.
 3. All Category 1 and 2 exchange program approvals must be communicated to the school principal, through Exhibit 2-24.1 Exchange Program Approval Form

Category 1 and 2 Exchange Programs

1. The Superintendent is authorized to approve Category 1 and 2 exchange programs. The Superintendent will inform the Board of any Exchange Programs that are approved.
2. The Superintendent and the Board retains the right to cancel any trip without providing compensation for monies lost by the school or families due to cancellation.
3. To receive approval in principal, the Exchange Trip Leader shall submit the field trip proposal to the principal, who shall submit it to the Superintendent, **at least six months prior** to the anticipated departure date, however, it is recommended that principals seek approval in principle one year prior to the anticipated departure date. Proposals that are not submitted at least six months prior to the anticipated departure date will not be considered for approval by the Superintendent. The application shall contain detailed information as follows:
 - A. All the information required under Section 4 below.
 - B. A schedule and draft agendas for planned parent meetings.
 - C. A contingency plan in case the destination(s), accommodations or methods of transportation become unavailable or unsuitable.
 - D. Applicable Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (travel.gc.ca) Advisories.
 - E. A copy of a letter to be provided to students and parents that indicates that the Superintendent or the Board can cancel any program without providing compensation for monies lost by the school or families due to the cancellation.
4. The application shall contain detailed information on the following: Education value and curriculum relevance
 - A. Student background including the number of students and their grade(s)
 - B. An itinerary that includes, for each activity, its date and time of departure and arrival, the location, mode of transportation used to get to the site, and any accommodation
 - C. Supervision plan including number of teacher supervisors, number of parent supervisors and supervision ratio
 - D. The Parent Information Letter (as described in Administrative Procedure 2-09 Field Trip Planning)
 - E. For High Risk Activities review SPHEReS – Safety Guidelines for Alberta Schools
 - F. Cost and funding arrangements
 - G. Emergency and communication arrangements
 - H. Security precautions and evacuation procedures, if applicable.

5. To receive final approval, the Exchange Program Leader, **at least one month prior** to departure, shall provide to both the principal and the Superintendent copies of
 - A. Any updates to the application submitted in section 3
 - B. Copies of all travellers' passports
 - C. A communication plan including contact information suitable for international travel.
6. Typically the principal shall receive approval for the exchange program prior to any fund raising or collection of money designated for a specific program. However, the principal may approve fund raising or collection of money in advance of the program approval, provided he or she develops a plan, approved by the Superintendent, to deal with monies lost to deposits or monies needing to be returned due to non-approval or cancelation.

Exchange Program Planning

1. No staff member shall embark on an exchange program without written approval from the authorizing authority, as described in this Administrative Procedure. As early as is practically possible, staff members should inform the Principal of their intention to plan an exchange trip. Staff members who are seeking approval of an exchange program must make written application for approval in accord with the terms and timelines set out in this Administrative Procedure.

Field Trip Leader Responsibilities

1. Every exchange program as described in this procedure must have a designated Exchange Program Leader approved by the school Principal. The Exchange Program Leader plans and organizes the exchange program and is responsible for:
 - Identifying risks and providing methods of addressing safety concerns. For High Risk Activities review SPHEREs – Safety Guidelines for Alberta Schools
 - A. Following timelines, completing forms, obtaining permissions and fulfilling the requirements outlined in this Procedure

Requirements for Supervision of Students

Exchange Program Leaders are responsible for the level and quality of supervision on each trip, giving consideration to the following factors:

- The number of participants
- The age, maturity and competency of the participants
- The distance involved
- The duration of the exchange program
- The nature of the venue(s) being visited
- The type of transportation being used
- The nature of the activities to be undertaken and the risks associated with them
- The extent to which the teacher supervisor is familiar with the venue(s) and activities
- The supervision guidelines suggested in the SPHEREs – Safety Guidelines for Alberta Schools
- Other factors which are important to the successful and safe implementation of the trip.

Exchange Program Leaders may only assign supervisory duties to adults 21 years of age or older.

Exchange Program Leaders shall consider the following guidelines to determine adequate supervision levels.

- A. The recommended levels of supervision at the destination is:

- a. one adult to fifteen students (1:15) for students in grades nine to twelve.
- B. Staff at the destination maybe considered to be supervisors provided that they are providing direct instruction or supervision to the students.
- C. Typically, recommended levels of supervision during transportation to and from the destination are the same as the recommended levels of supervision at the destination.
- D. Exchange Program Leaders shall ensure that there are both male and female supervisors for overnight trips where students of both genders are participating.
- E. Exchange Program Leaders shall ensure that students are supervised at all times. An adult supervisor must be available to students at all times (24 hours per day) for all Exchange Programs.

Emergency Planning

- A. Exchange Program Leaders must ensure that all personnel involved in exchange programs shall be familiar with the doctrine of in “loco parentis”.
- B. Exchange Program Leaders shall determine the extent to which it is necessary for trip supervisory personnel to possess a current knowledge of basic first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and/or other emergency procedures. When determining the first aid qualifications that supervisors require, Exchange Program Leaders shall consider, identified student medical needs, the risks of injury associated with the trip, and the response time for medical support.
- C. Exchange Program Leaders shall ensure that all students and supervisors, participating in exchange programs to destinations outside Canada, provide evidence to demonstrate that appropriate out of country medical coverage has been obtained.
- D. Exchange Program Leaders shall ensure that students are informed of specific strategies they should use should they become lost or separated. The Exchange Program Leader will, where appropriate, provide students with the following:
 - a. A muster location
 - b. The Exchange Program Leader and supervisor’s cell phone numbers
 - c. The address and phone number for hotels, airlines, Canadian embassy or consulate, etc.
- E. Exchange Program Leaders shall construct a Resource Kit for each field program. A Resource Kit should consist of, but not necessarily be limited to:
 - a. A first aid kit, unless a first aid kit is otherwise readily available
 - b. A cell phone or other reliable means of communication, given the nature of the program
 - c. Contact telephone numbers for the parents/guardians of all participating students and supervisors
 - d. Contact information for emergency authorities at the destination and any other locations visited
 - e. Phone numbers of school administrators
 - f. EX 2 – 24.5 Medication Administration Log
 - g. A class / participant list
 - h. Any medication approved by parents under EX 2 – 24.4 Medical Information and Medication Administration and Release Form.
 - i. If an accident occurs during an exchange program, the Exchange Program Leader shall have a plan to:
 - i. Communicate the need for rescue, assistance or ambulance as required
 - ii. Communicate to the supervisors, Principal and parents changes made to exchange program agendas and destinations in the event of an emergency
 - iii. Complete an accident report.

Transportation

Exchange Program Leaders shall ensure that all travel shall be by approved school bus, school owned bus, approved public transportation or approved private transportation. When using private transportation, the Exchange Program Leader must follow Administrative Procedure 5 – 06 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles.

Informed Parental Consent

- A. Exchange Program leaders shall prepare a Parent Information Letter (based on the EX 2-24.3 Acknowledgement of Risk and Informed Consent Form) which includes, depending on the nature and complexity of the exchange trip, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. A description of the purpose and educational benefits of the activity
 - b. The Exchange Program Leader’s name and contact information (school phone number)
 - c. An itinerary that includes, for each activity, its date and time of departure and arrival, the location, mode of transportation used to get to the site, and any accommodation.
 - d. A map of the area or the address of the destination
 - e. Risk assessment and controls for each activity. For High Risk Activities, the parents must be advised of the hazards.
 - f. Student cost and/or financial arrangements of the activity as well as cancellation and refund policy
 - g. Advise that the Superintendent or the Board retain the right to cancel any trip without providing compensation for monies lost by the school or families due to cancellation.
 - h. Supervisory arrangements
 - i. Need for additional medical coverage for out of country trips
 - j. Parent meeting dates, if any
 - k. Any other related information that may change the parent’s decision to allow the student’s participation
 - l. Information regarding the parents’ rights to deny participation
 - m. The responsibility of the parent to provide their child’s medical history
 - n. A method for parents to ask and receive answers to questions
 - o. The need for parents to complete EX 2-24.3 Acknowledgement Risk and Informed Consent Form, EX 2-24.4 Medical Information and Medication Administration and Release Form
 - p. For out of country trips, a Consent Letter for Children Traveling Abroad must be completed. See <http://travel.gc.ca/> for a sample letter.
- B. Exchange Program Leaders must ensure that a signed copy of the complete EX 2-24.3 Acknowledgement Risk and Informed Consent Form, EX 2-24.4 Medical Information and Medication Administration and Release Form is received for each student participating in the activity prior to any participation in the activity.

Record Keeping/Retention

On every occasion that the Exchange Program Leader or any supervisor authorized by the Exchange Program Leader gives a student medication as permitted by the parent in EX 2-24.4 Medication Administration and Release Form, the Exchange Program Leader shall enter the event in EX 2.24.5 Medication Administration Log. The completed EX 2.24.5 Medication Administration Log shall be delivered to the Principal at the completion of the program. Prior to the departure date, the Principal shall collect all program documentation or copies thereof and retain those records at the school for three years after the school year in which the exchange program occurred. The exchange program records that the Principal shall collect and retain include:

- A. EX 2 – 24.2 Exchange Program Application
- B. EX 2 – 24.3 Acknowledgement of Risk and Informed Consent Form – *Exemplars for Local Excursions, Sports Teams, Typical Day Trips and Offsite Activities.*
- C. EX 2 – 24.4 Medical Information and Medication Administration and Release Form

- D. EX 2 – 24.5 Medication Administration Log
- E. List of participating students
- F. Completed Accident Report Forms
- G. Agenda, minutes and attendance records from all exchange program meetings (including parent meetings)
- H. Copies of any correspondence, memorandums, receipts, booking confirmations, etc. relating to the program.

REFERENCE AND LINKS

Education Act

Safety Guidelines for Physical Activities in Alberta Schools

Safety Guidelines for Secondary Interschool Athletics in Alberta

Administrative Procedure 5 – 06 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles

HISTORY

2018 Mar 14 Approved

2019 Nov 26 Reviewed

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