

SECTION 700 – Educational Program

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE: OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES-INTERNATIONAL

<i>PROCEDURE CODE:</i>	<i>720 AP 004</i>
Policy Reference: 720 – Off-Site Activities	Exhibits: 720 E 002 – Health Certification and Consent (Extracurricular Activities) 720 E 005 – Non-Local or Overnight Off-Site Activity Approval 720 E 006 – Off-Site Activity Risk Assessment 720 E 007 – Automobile Driver Authorization 720 E 010 – International Trips-Approval in Principle 720 E 011 – International Trips-Final Approval 720 E 012 – Consent for National-International Trips 720 E 013 – Volunteer Registration Form 720 E 014 – Travel Declaration for National- International Trips 720 E 015 – Travel Accounting Template

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

The Division supports off-site activities by classes, school groups, and individual students during and/or outside of school hours, when such excursions have a definite educational value and are an integral part of the planned instructional and extracurricular programs.

While off-site activities have positive educational value, care must be taken to ensure that all off-site activities are organized in a manner that maximizes educational benefit and ensures the protection and safety of students.

DEFINITIONS

Off-Site Activities: Includes all field trips, excursions, national and international tours, extracurricular and co-curricular activities occurring off-site where the 'site' is the school grounds and buildings belonging to MHPSD.

Extracurricular Activities:	Organized student activities connected to broader educational goals of a social, sports-related, or cultural nature (i.e., band, basketball, football). All extracurricular activities taking place off-site are considered under the guidelines of this AP.
Off-Campus Education:	Includes programs such as work-study, work experience, registered apprenticeship, cooperative education, and job shadowing programs as per Policy 718 – Off-Campus Education.
Athletic Academy Activities:	Dual focus programming designed to achieve academic excellence while immersing students in a sports environment.
Lead Teacher:	The teacher directly responsible for the planning, coordination, and implementation of the off-site activity.
Supervisor:	An adult over the age of 18 years who is not a high school student and who has been selected by the Lead Teacher and approved by the principal to assist on an off-site activity.
Parent:	A person as defined in the Education Act section 1(1) and (2).

PROCEDURES

International Trips

- A) International trips are those that are outside of Canada.
- B) International trips require the approval of the Principal/designate, OHS Officer, Secretary Treasurer and Superintendent. In addition, all international trips require approval in principle by the Board of Trustees.
- C) International trips are subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) A designated lead teacher is responsible for the organization of the outing, ensuring all requirements are followed and will be present on the off-site activity;
 - 2) Have a curriculum focus that is linked directly to, or is an extension of, the Alberta Education Program of Studies;
 - 3) Have curricular outcomes that cannot be accomplished in the regular school setting;
 - 4) Consider the diversity of the student population and ensure the activity is both accessible and inclusive, and that participation is not limited by a parent's financial limitations;
 - 5) Are planned in accordance with and meet the allowable grade levels for the type of trip as per the School Physical Activity Chart (722 E 001) and the [School Physical Activity, Health & Education Resource for Safety](#) (SPHEReS);
 - 6) Have adequate teacher and adult supervision, including both male and female supervisors if required as per the School Physical Activity Chart (722 E 001) and the School Physical Activity, Health & Education Resource for Safety (SPHEReS). In the case of disagreement between the two documents, the higher standard will apply.



- 7) Be limited to ten (10) days with a maximum of two days being student instruction days.

***Any exceptions to be approved by the Superintendent.**

Approval Procedures:

- 1) A *Non-Local or Overnight Off-Site Activity Approval (720 E 005)* and *Approval in Principle (720 E 010)* must, whenever possible, be completed by the lead teacher 1 year in advance of the trip, signed by the principal, and submitted to the OHS Officer and Superintendent or designate for review.
- 2) The Superintendent or designate will indicate approval, or lack thereof, by reviewing and signing the application and will present it to the Board for authorization.
- 3) Safety and security of the destination(s) will be assessed referencing the Government of Canada travel and tourism website <https://travel.gc.ca/>
- 4) The Board will not approve travel to any destination, country, or region where a travel advisory exists and may cancel any international trip based on changing or uncertain safety and security at the destination cities and countries.
- 5) A Final Approval (720 E 011) must be completed by the lead teacher and submitted to the OHS Officer, Secretary Treasurer and Superintendent or designate with accompanying documents for final approval 2 weeks prior to the scheduled board meeting.
- 6) The Board reserves the right to cancel any trip to a destination where the advisory level has changed prior to travel dates. This will include where advisories have changed from the date that the trip was preliminary approved, up to and including, the date of travel.
- 7) The Board reserves the right to recall any trip if, during the trip, the circumstances in the country or region change and the Board is of the opinion that it is in the best interest of the group to leave.
- 8) The Board further reserves the right to cancel or recall any trips that, in the Board's opinion, puts the personal safety of the students or the staff at risk.

Lead Teacher Additional Considerations:

- 1) A detailed itinerary must be submitted that aligns with the Off-Site Activity Summary (Schedule A – 720 AP 001). Changes to the scheduled itinerary and activities require updated approval from the principal and OHS Officer, excluding changes due to an emergency. All changes must be communicated as soon as possible.
- 2) The lead teacher will ensure that supervisors and activity leaders have appropriate knowledge and training, including valid first aid certification as required.
- 3) The trip is limited to students in grades 10 – 12.
- 4) All trip participants must be in possession of a passport valid for at least six (6) months beyond the expected return date.



- 5) The lead teacher will facilitate one or more parent/guardian meetings to discuss tour arrangements and risks, and a parent/guardian for each student participating must be in attendance. If necessary, parents/guardians not able to be in attendance may be informed personally at another time. The meeting(s) shall inform parents/guardians, at a minimum, of the following:
 - A review of this procedure as the guiding document for trip planning
 - The name of the lead teacher and a contact number
 - Purpose/goal of the educational study tour
 - Proposed itinerary, with date and time of departure and return
 - Description of activities or events planned
 - Any inherent risks and consequences associated with the activities/events (inherent risk refers to the hazard, danger, chance of injury, damage or loss that exists in something as a natural and inseparable quality or characteristic of that activity)
 - Elements of risk which may be encountered, such as rigorous physical activity, water-related activities, or water sports
 - Safety precautions in place to deal with activities involving risk
 - Contingency plans and emergency procedures to be followed in the event of injury, illness, or unusual circumstances
 - Trip cancellation potential and insurance, including optional additional coverage
 - Need for any special equipment, clothing, or personal items
 - A reminder that parents/guardians must inform the lead teacher about any relevant medical conditions of the student (e.g. food allergies)
 - Expectations for student behaviour
 - Arrangements for supervision
 - Transportation methods and arrangements
 - Accommodation arrangements
 - Cost to the student
 - Cost to the participants
 - Fundraising plans
 - Open accounting of revenues and expenses
- 6) The lead teacher will maintain a record of the dates of the meetings, names of participating parents and meeting agendas/minutes.
- 7) The lead teacher will develop a written action plan for any student with an identified health condition.
- 8) The lead teacher, school Principal and school counsellor and/or CST will conduct a risk review of the student participants.



- 9) The lead teacher will ensure that everyone involved understands and will comply with any health measures that are in place locally and abroad. These include health measures set by the Canadian and or Alberta governments and any set by the destination countries.
- 10) The lead teacher will collect a completed Government of Canada [Consent Letter for Children Travelling Abroad](#) for each student prior to departure and have the letters available throughout the duration of the international trip. The lead teacher will not sign as witness and will advise that parent/guardian signatures should be witnessed by a Commissioner of Oaths.
- 11) The lead teacher will ensure that all trip participants, including adults and students, completes the Government of Canada [Registration of Canadians Abroad](#) prior to departure.
- 12) The lead teacher will create and share a list of the addresses and contact information for Canadian Government offices in the destination countries <https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/embassies-consulates>
- 13) The lead teacher is responsible for the management, security and retention of all documents pertaining to the international trip. Any documents that contain private personal or health information (passports, medical plans, etc.) should be stored in a secured electronic format. Documents that require review or storage should be kept as per the MHSD Document Retention Schedule with access granted to collaborators. These documents may include but are not limited to:
 - Schedules/itineraries/tour details
 - Completed forms with signed approvals
 - Parent meeting minutes, attendance/non-attendance lists
 - Student participant lists, medical forms, travel insurance, and passport copies
 - Signed Student Code of Conduct Forms
 - Lesson plans
 - Maps
 - Records of itinerary changes
 - Contracts with tour operators and service providers
 - Accident forms and all post-accident notes, reports and correspondence
 - Financial reports
 - Trip debrief report

Transportation

- 1) Where transportation is necessary internationally, the principal may:
 - Authorize the use of a licensed carrier; or
 - Authorize the use of a rental vehicle



- 2) When rental vehicles are used, completion of an Automobile Driver Authorization Form (720 E 007) is required.

Costs Associated with International Trips:

- 1) A travel trip financial estimate [720 E 015 – Travel Accounting Template](#) must be submitted with the trip application and the final trip accounting submitted to the Finance Department within 20 days after returning from the trip. All trip finances must be managed through the school SGF accounts.
- 2) The cost to individual students should not inhibit participation nor discriminate by income.
- 3) International tours may be supported in part or whole by parents or guardians of eligible students.
- 4) Fundraising may be utilized to support the activity in part or whole and participants shall have equitable access to fundraising dollars, based on the involvement of the participant in the fundraising activities.
- 5) Fundraising activities must adhere to [Policy 416: Fundraising/Canvassing](#)

Responsibilities of Supervisors (including volunteers):

- 1) Every adult travelling with the group will have supervision responsibilities. Non-supervisory adults are not permitted.
- 2) A current (within in the school year) Volunteer Registration Form (720 E 013) and police information check with vulnerable sector search must be completed for all non-staff adult supervisors.
- 3) An adult supervisor must be always available to students (24 hours per day).
- 4) Supervisors must also:
 - Complete appropriate trip forms
 - Know the details of the activity and their specific duties and authority prior to departure
 - Be appropriately identified for the duration of the trip
 - Report any inappropriate conduct to the lead teacher
 - Adhere to the schedule or itinerary
 - Dress appropriately according to the type of activity
 - Fulfill their duties for the duration of the activity, including evenings and weekends
 - Attend meetings as required

Extracurricular Trips

- A) All extracurricular sports and club trips must be approved by the Principal using the Extracurricular Off-Site Activities Form (720 E 004). This is limited to regularly scheduled activities, such as league play, exhibition games, tournaments, and zone/provincial playoffs. Trips are subject to the following conditions:



- 1) Health Certification and Consent Form (720 E 002) is completed.
- 2) Extracurricular off-site activities that are international or do not meet the definition of regularly scheduled in Item A) above, must follow the same requirements as all other off-site activities.

Insurance requirements

Medicine Hat Public School Board has provided for insurance coverage for all students and supervisors/chaperones travelling internationally. The insurance coverage includes medical, trip cancellation/interruption and baggage.

All students and supervisors/chaperones are required to purchase the division travel Insurance.

Approved: June 13, 2006

Revised: October 7, 2024

