

# Administrative Procedure 260

## Instructional Programs and Materials

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### FIELD TRIPS

#### BACKGROUND

Westmount Charter School (WCS) recognizes that well-planned field trips provide meaningful educational experiences that enhance student learning and support the Alberta Education Program of Studies.

The Charter Board is committed to providing a safe, caring, and welcoming learning environment for students, including during school activities that occur off school property.

Field trips are considered an extension of the instructional program and must be planned and conducted in accordance with this Administrative Procedure.

The Superintendent and Principal are jointly responsible for the administration of this Administrative Procedure.

This Administrative Procedure is developed in accordance with the *Education Act*, the *Access to Information Act (ATIA)*, the *Protection of Privacy Act (POPA)*, and other applicable provincial legislation, regulations, and safety standards governing student supervision and off-site activities.

#### DEFINITIONS

The definitions in the table below apply to this Administrative Procedure.

<b>Field Trip</b>	An authorized school activity that occurs off school property, excluding off-campus courses, work-study programs, and approved community spaces (MH only).
<b>Trip Leader</b>	The teacher who is primarily responsible for planning the field trip and supervising students and chaperones during the trip.
<b>Trip Administrator</b>	The Principal, Assistant Principal, or Superintendent who may attend an overnight, out-of-province, or international field trip, as determined by the Principal or Superintendent based on the nature, complexity, and risk level of the trip. The Trip Administrator supports the Trip Leader and assists with student safety, supervision, discipline, and emergency response during the trip.
<b>Chaperone</b>	A Westmount Charter School employee or approved volunteer who attends a field trip to assist with student supervision.

#### PROCEDURES

1. Categories of Field Trips
  - 1.1 For the purposes of this Administrative Procedure, four categories of field trips are recognized:
    - 1.1.1 Same Day, In-Province Field Trips;
    - 1.1.2 Overnight, In-Province Field Trips;
    - 1.1.3 Out-of-Province Field Trips (Within Canada); and
    - 1.1.4 International Field Trips.

## 2. General Requirements

- 2.1 All field trips must have a primary educational purpose aligned with the Alberta Education Program of Studies and/or Westmount Charter School's charter mandate.
- 2.2 Field trips must be planned and conducted in a manner that reflects the school's duty of care, including appropriate risk assessment, supervision, and emergency preparedness.
- 2.3 Field trips shall not have travel or tourism as their primary purpose.
- 2.4 Participation in a field trip shall not be a prerequisite for successful completion of any required course.
- 2.5 No student shall be denied participation in a field trip due to financial hardship. This provision does not apply to out-of-province or international field trips.
- 2.6 Students who do not participate in a same-day field trip shall be provided with an appropriate alternative instructional program.
- 2.7 Students are expected to comply with the Student Code of Conduct at all times.
- 2.8 The Charter Board will not compensate its staff or agents by means of salary or time off in lieu for any field trips which are conducted outside the regular instructional day (e.g. evenings, weekends, holidays).
- 2.9 No employee may miss a required professional learning day or parent-teacher conferences because of a trip, unless approved by the Superintendent.
- 2.10 The school's liability coverage extends to approved field trips.

## 3. Approval Authority

- 3.1 The following approval requirements apply unless otherwise noted:
  - 3.1.1 Same-Day, In-Province Field Trips require approval by the Principal.
  - 3.1.2 Overnight, In-Province and Out-of-Province Field Trips within Canada require approval by the Principal and Superintendent.
  - 3.1.3 International Field Trips require Charter Board approval in principle, operational approval by the Superintendent, and final authorization by the Principal.
  - 3.1.4 No commitments, advertising, or payments may occur before required approvals.
  - 3.1.5 A teacher shall be designated as the Trip Leader in charge.
  - 3.1.6 Prior written parental/guardian permission must be obtained for participating students in accordance with Section 4 and the applicable timelines set out in Section 15.
  - 3.1.7 Parents/guardians are expected to provide their children with appropriate protection from the elements and from the setting, including appropriate attire, footwear, hats, and sunscreen where applicable.

## 4. Informed Consent and Parental Permission

- 4.1 Written parental/guardian permission must be obtained for all field trips. Before the field trip, parents/guardians must be provided with written information that includes:
  - 4.1.1 The educational purpose and learning objectives of the field trip;
  - 4.1.2 The itinerary, locations, and dates of travel;
  - 4.1.3 Planned activities and any associated risks;
  - 4.1.4 Supervision arrangements and safety measures;

- 4.1.5 Transportation methods and travel arrangements;
  - 4.1.6 Cost and payment schedule;
  - 4.1.7 Emergency procedures and contact information;
  - 4.1.8 Requirements for medical, health, and dietary information disclosure; and
  - 4.1.9 Notice of inherent or elevated risks, where applicable.
  - 4.2 Parental/guardian consent must include authorization for necessary medical treatment in the event of illness or injury during field trips that occur outside Calgary.
  - 4.3 Supervisors shall not make significant or material changes to the approved itinerary once parental/guardian permission has been obtained, unless required for safety, emergency, or unforeseen circumstances.
5. Supervision and Staffing
- 5.1 A Trip Leader must be designated for every field trip and is responsible for overall organization, coordination, and supervision of the trip.
  - 5.2 Chaperones must:
    - 5.2.1 Be approved by the Principal;
    - 5.2.2 Be at least 18 years of age for same-day field trips, and at least 21 years of age for overnight, out-of-province, or international field trips;
    - 5.2.3 Provide a current Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector Check; and
    - 5.2.4 Follow the direction of the Trip Leader and comply with all applicable school policies and procedures.
  - 5.3 The following minimum supervision ratios shall normally apply for same-day, in-province field trips:
    - 5.3.1 Kindergarten: 1 adult per 5 students
    - 5.3.2 Grades 1-4: 1 adult per 8 students
    - 5.3.3 Grades 5-6: 1 adult per 10 students
    - 5.3.4 Grades 7-9: 1 adult per 12 students
    - 5.3.5 Grades 10-12: 1 adult per 15 students
  - 5.4 The Principal or Superintendent may require additional supervision based on student age, student needs, medical considerations, the nature or location of activities, and the assessed level of risk.
  - 5.5 Student groups shall be supervised in a manner that ensures appropriate, inclusive, and respectful oversight. Where supervision considerations are relevant, efforts will be made to include staff members or chaperones representing a diversity of genders to appropriately support student needs. Any exceptions must be approved by the Principal or Superintendent.
  - 5.6 Staff members and chaperones shall not lodge in the same room as students, except in exceptional circumstances and with prior approval from the Principal, such as where the adult is the parent or legal guardian of a participating student.
  - 5.7 Students must remain under the supervision and direction of school staff or designated chaperones at all times during a field trip. Any limited independent time must be pre-approved by the Trip Leader and Principal, structured, and subject to clear supervision arrangements, check-in procedures, and defined boundaries.

- 5.8 Employees and chaperones are responsible for maintaining active supervision of students throughout the field trip and must remain available and accessible to students at all times. Employees and chaperones shall not engage in activities that would compromise their ability to provide effective supervision.

## 6. Trip Leader Responsibilities

### 6.1 A Trip Leader shall:

- 6.1.1 Plan and organize the field trip in accordance with this Administrative Procedure and any applicable school policies;
- 6.1.2 Conduct appropriate planning and site-specific risk or hazard assessments for the activities involved;
- 6.1.3 Ensure that all required approvals, documentation, and permissions are obtained before the trip;
- 6.1.4 Provide direction to and coordinate the supervision responsibilities of staff and chaperones;
- 6.1.5 Maintain possession of required emergency and student information, including a student list with emergency contact information, relevant medical plans, a first aid kit, and a reliable communication device;
- 6.1.6 Coordinate the response to any illness, injury, or emergency that may arise during the trip; and
- 6.1.7 Immediately notify school administration of any serious incident, injury, or situation that may present a risk to students or staff.

## 7. Trip Administrator Responsibilities

- 7.1 In some circumstances, a Trip Administrator (Principal, Assistant Principal, or Superintendent) may attend an overnight, out-of-province, or international field trip, as determined by the Principal or Superintendent based on the nature, complexity, or risk level of the trip. When present, the Trip Administrator provides administrative support to the Trip Leader and helps ensure student safety, supervision, and effective decision-making.

### 7.2 When a Trip Administrator attends a field trip, they shall:

- 7.2.1 Support and advise the Trip Leader in the planning and implementation of the field trip;
- 7.2.2 Provide on-site administrative oversight and support, as required;
- 7.2.3 Assist with student supervision and staff coordination where appropriate;
- 7.2.4 Address significant behavioural or disciplinary matters that arise during the trip;
- 7.2.5 Assist in responding to emergencies or significant incidents; and
- 7.2.6 Liaise with school administration, parents/guardians, and emergency services when necessary.

## 8. Conduct

- 8.1 At all times during a field trip, each student, staff, chaperone, and parent/guardian must comply with all applicable codes of conduct and Administrative Procedures, as adapted to the field trip setting. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - 8.1.1 Responsibilities under the *Education Act*;
  - 8.1.2 AP-111 Parent/Guardian Responsibilities;
  - 8.1.3 AP-136 Occupational Health and Safety;

- 8.1.4 AP-336 Student Health and Safety;
- 8.1.5 AP-340 Student Code of Conduct;
- 8.1.6 AP-350 Student Discipline;
- 8.1.7 AP-407 Employee Code of Conduct;
- 8.1.8 AP-418 Employee Impairment, Substance Use, and Gambling;
- 8.1.9 AP-546 Risk Management; and
- 8.1.10 AP-555 Volunteers.

## 9. Risk Management and Safety

- 9.1 All overnight, out-of-province, and international field trips must:
  - 9.1.1 Include a written risk and safety assessment;
  - 9.1.2 Include contingency plans for illness or injury, weather, and/or transportation disruptions;
  - 9.1.3 Comply with *Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools* and Westmount AP-546 Risk Management;
  - 9.1.4 Include trained first aid supervisors; and
  - 9.1.5 Carry appropriate emergency equipment.
- 9.2 International field trips shall not proceed to any location for which the Government of Canada has issued a travel advisory higher than “Exercise normal security precautions.”
- 9.3 Field trips involving higher-risk activities may require additional approval, documentation, or insurance confirmation, as determined by the Principal and/or Superintendent.

## 10. Student Medical Conditions

- 10.1 Individualized planning and risk management considerations shall be applied to students with severe or complex medical conditions in accordance with applicable school procedures and medical guidance.
- 10.2 Individual medical needs and risk assessments must inform planning for such students. Factors to consider include, but are not limited to:
  - 10.2.1 Ensuring an adequate number of prescribed emergency medications are available and accessible at all times;
  - 10.2.2 Ensuring immediate access to emergency transportation, including the availability of a vehicle or proximity to emergency medical services and facilities;
  - 10.2.3 Reviewing the student’s emergency care plan with parents/guardians and all supervising staff before the field trip;
  - 10.2.4 Assigning a designated peer “buddy” who will inform a supervisor if the student is unwell or exhibits symptoms of an allergic reaction;
  - 10.2.5 Obtaining written authorization from parents/guardians before the student consumes any food or drink not provided from home;
  - 10.2.6 Requesting ingredient lists for any food ordered from commercial vendors;
  - 10.2.7 Avoiding the student’s participation in food preparation or clean-up activities where exposure risks may be present; and
  - 10.2.8 Where identified risks cannot be reasonably mitigated, it is necessary to determine that the student may be unable to participate in the field trip,

with such decisions made in consultation with the parents/guardians and school administration.

## 11. Transportation

- 11.1 Transportation must comply with AP-560 Student Transportation Off-Campus.
- 11.2 All transportation arrangements must prioritize student safety and comply with applicable provincial legislation, insurance requirements, and school authority expectations.
- 11.3 Only approved transportation providers and insured vehicles may be used.
- 11.4 Transportation providers must demonstrate appropriate licensing, valid insurance coverage, and adherence to applicable safety and regulatory standards.
- 11.5 Where third-party travel agencies or providers are used, they must operate in accordance with recognized industry standards. Membership in professional associations (e.g., Alliance of Canadian Travel Agencies (ACTA)) may be considered an asset, but is not required.

## 12. Financial Responsibilities and Liability

- 12.1 Field trips may be funded through school budgets, fundraising, grants, or parent/guardian contributions.
- 12.2 Parents/guardians acknowledge that:
  - 12.2.1 They assume responsibility for non-refundable costs; and
  - 12.2.2 That the Charter Board is not responsible for losses arising from circumstances beyond its reasonable control, including acts of government, border restrictions, public health orders, pandemics, natural disasters, or decisions made by transportation or accommodation providers.
- 12.3 No staff, student, or chaperone may receive personal financial benefit from a field trip.
- 12.4 All payments must be made to the school or approved third-party vendor and processed according to signing authority procedures.

## 13. Records and Documentation

- 13.1 The school office shall maintain a calendar of field trips so that staff and parents/guardians may have immediate access to information.
- 13.2 The Trip Leader must notify the school office of any changes to participants, departure times, arrival times, or activity locations, and obtain Principal approval when appropriate.
- 13.3 The school shall retain records for each field trip, including:
  - 13.3.1 Approvals;
  - 13.3.2 Risk assessments;
  - 13.3.3 Consent forms;
  - 13.3.4 Participation lists;
  - 13.3.5 Supervisory lists; and
  - 13.3.6 Incident reports.

## 14. Information Management and Privacy

- 14.1 All personal, medical, and emergency information collected for field trips shall be:
  - 14.1.1 Used only for student safety and supervision;
  - 14.1.2 Stored securely; and

- 14.1.3 Accessed only by authorized school personnel.
- 14.2 The collection, use, disclosure, retention, and disposal of personal information shall comply with:
  - 14.2.1 The *Access to Information Act (ATIA)*;
  - 14.2.2 The *Protection of Privacy Act (POPA)*; and
  - 14.2.3 Westmount Charter School AP-170 Access to Information and Protection of Privacy.
- 14.3 Consent forms and medical information shall be:
  - 14.3.1 Retained only for the period necessary to fulfill legal and safety obligations; and
  - 14.3.2 Disposed of securely in accordance with records management requirements.
- 15. Category-Specific Requirements
  - 15.1 Same-Day, In-Province Field Trips
    - 15.1.1 Same-day, in-province field trips require prior approval by the Principal before any commitments are made to students or parents/guardians.
    - 15.1.2 Parents/guardians must be provided with all information required under Section 4.
    - 15.1.3 In most circumstances, a minimum of two weeks' notice should be provided.
    - 15.1.4 Written parental/guardian consent must be received before student participation and departure.
  - 15.2 Overnight, In-Province and Out-of-Province Field Trips Within Canada
    - 15.2.1 Overnight, in-province and out-of-province field trips within Canada require prior approval by the Principal and Superintendent before any commitments are made to students or parents/guardians.
    - 15.2.2 The Principal shall ensure that parents/guardians are encouraged and provided with meaningful opportunities for input and engagement during planning. A high level of parental/guardian support for the trip should be demonstrated.
    - 15.2.3 Parents/guardians must be provided with all information required under Section 4.
    - 15.2.4 In most circumstances, a minimum of three months' notice should be provided.
    - 15.2.5 Written parental/guardian consent must be received before departure.
    - 15.2.6 Participation in this category of field trip is normally limited to students in Grades 7 and above, unless otherwise approved by the Principal and Superintendent.
    - 15.2.7 Supervision shall normally meet a minimum ratio of one adult for every eight students in Grades 7-9 and one adult for every ten students in Grades 10-12, with the exact ratio determined by the Principal or Superintendent based on student age, needs, and the level of risk.
    - 15.2.8 Staff shall maintain primary responsibility for student supervision, decision-making, and fulfillment of the school's duty of care. Chaperones may assist under the direction of the Trip Leader and certificated staff.
    - 15.2.9 Students must be covered by extended health coverage through their parent/guardian's employment plan or by Student Accident Insurance.

### 15.3 International Field Trips

- 15.3.1 International field trips require Charter Board approval in principle and operational approval by the Superintendent before any commitments are made to students, parents/guardians, or travel agencies.
- 15.3.2 The Principal shall ensure that parents/guardians are encouraged and provided with meaningful opportunities for input and engagement during planning. A high level of parental/guardian support for the trip should be demonstrated.
- 15.3.3 Parents/guardians must be provided with all information required under Section 4, including confirmation of appropriate travel and medical insurance coverage.
- 15.3.4 In most circumstances, a minimum of five months' notice is required.
- 15.3.5 Written parental/guardian permission must be received before departure.
- 15.3.6 Participation in this category of field trip is normally limited to students in Grades 10, 11, and 12.
- 15.3.7 International field trips should make maximum use of weekends and school holidays to minimize instructional time lost.
- 15.3.8 International destinations must have a history of political stability, no foreseeable risk of civil unrest, and health, transportation, and environmental risks that are not substantially greater than those experienced within Canada.
- 15.3.9 Supervision shall normally meet a minimum ratio of one adult for every eight students, with the exact ratio determined by the Principal or Superintendent based on student age, needs, the nature of the activities, and the assessed level of risk.
- 15.3.10 Certificated staff shall maintain primary responsibility for student supervision, professional decision-making, and fulfillment of the school's duty of care. Volunteers may assist under the direction of the Trip Leader and other certificated staff.
- 15.3.11 Students must be covered by extended health coverage through their parent/guardian's employment plan or by approved third-party student accident insurance, including international medical coverage.
- 15.3.12 After approvals and arrangements have been finalized, the Trip Leader and, where applicable, the Trip Administrator or Principal, shall organize and host a mandatory parent/guardian and student meeting. The meeting must include:
  - 15.3.12.1 The educational purpose of the trip and its alignment with curriculum outcomes;
  - 15.3.12.2 Itinerary details, including location(s), schedule, and associated costs;
  - 15.3.12.3 Travel arrangements, including transportation and tour operator information;
  - 15.3.12.4 Student conduct expectations and associated consequences;
  - 15.3.12.5 Risk management strategies and emergency response procedures;
  - 15.3.12.6 Parent/guardian responsibilities, including acknowledgment of financial commitments and risks;

15.3.12.7 Insurance coverage, including requirements and recommendations;

15.3.12.8 Completion of all required parent/guardian and student documentation; and

15.3.12.9 Any additional information necessary to support informed consent.

## 16. Prohibited Activities

16.1 Field trips shall not include;

16.1.1 Firearms;

16.1.2 Motorized racing;

16.1.3 Extreme sports;

16.1.4 Bungee jumping or skydiving;

16.1.5 Open-water scuba diving;

16.1.6 Trampolining;

16.1.7 Mechanical bull riding; and

16.1.8 Unsupervised wilderness activities.

16.2 Other activities, such as remote or wilderness areas, water activities, swimming, and skiing, are permitted provided that appropriate planning and risk management measures are in place to ensure the safety and security of students, staff, and chaperones.

16.3 All activities must meet Alberta safety guidelines.

16.4 All field trip activities are subject to approval by the Principal and Superintendent.

## 17. Private Trips

17.1 Trips not approved under this procedure are considered private.

17.2 The school and Charter Board assume no responsibility or liability for private trips.

17.3 School resources may not be used to organize or promote private trips.

**Cross Reference:** Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools  
*Education Act*

*Access to Information Act (ATIA)*

*Protection of Privacy Act (POPA)*

AP-136 Occupational Health and Safety

AP-546 Risk Management

AP-316 Administration of Medication or Medical Treatment

AP-319 Severe Allergies

AP-555 Volunteers

AP-560 Student Transportation Off-Campus

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