

POLICY

It is the policy of the Upper Grand District School Board to support school-organized and supervised educational programs which occur beyond the school site that offer educational value to students, enhance the curriculum and support the mission and vision of the Board and the school.

Administrative Detail

1. It is the responsibility of the appropriate Superintendents to administer this policy in accordance with the Educational Field Trips Procedures Manual 508-A.
2. It is the responsibility of Principals to ensure that all aspects of this policy and procedures are implemented by all school staff and volunteers.
3. It is the responsibility of all Board employees to adhere to this policy and procedures.
4. Any school sanctioned off site activities must follow this policy and procedures.
5. In secondary schools the course description in the Course Calendar should note where Field Trips are included as a part of the regular program of study.
6. Schools should consider the applicable Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) guidelines as a reference tool when planning a Field Trip.
7. Where more than one Teacher is involved in the supervision of students on a Field Trip, the Principal shall designate one of the Teachers as the Teacher-in-Charge.
8. Teachers have the primary responsibility for supervision of students on Field Trips. They shall demonstrate an acceptable standard of care, and consider their significant responsibility for safety and risk management when planning, preparing and supervising these programs.

9. The responsibility for organizing Educational Field Trips rests with the classroom Teacher, under the supervision of the Principal.
10. Volunteers may assist Teachers with Field Trips and may be assigned specific supervision responsibilities by the Teacher-in-Charge or the Principal.
11. To minimize the risk aspects and enhance the educational value of Field Trips, the Teacher-in-Charge should consider the skills, certification and credentials of all supervisory personnel involved in the activity.
12. In exceptional circumstances, a Principal/supervisor may submit a written request to the appropriate Superintendent for a modification to a specific section of this policy.
13. This policy shall operate in conjunction with the following Board policies: Emergency Procedures #300, Transportation #304, Volunteers #205 and Health Support Services #509, and any risk management information and guidelines provided to schools by the Board or its insurer (OSBIE).
14. In this policy parent means parent/guardian, or adult student at least 18 years of age.
15. All forms shall be retained for a period of one year from the return date of the Field Trip. If there is an incident, records need to be retained until the student's 20th birthday.

508-1 Approval/Information Form

508-2 Parental Information/Consent Form

508-3 Transportation of Students in Privately-Owned Vehicles

508-4 Overnight Trip Approval

508-5 Aquatics Program Approval

508-6 Risk Analysis Plan for Overnight Wilderness Trips

508-7 Parental Information/Blanket Consent Form

16. This policy includes the following appendices which Principals must bring to the attention of Teachers:

- A: Activity Risk Chart
- B: Day Trip Preparation Checklist
- C: Overnight Trip Preparation Checklist
- D: Field Trip Emergency Procedures Checklist
- E: Sample of Completed Risk Analysis Plan
for Overnight Wilderness Trips (508-6)

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APPENDICES

A	Activity Risk Chart
B	Day Trip Preparation Checklist
C	Overnight Trip Preparation Checklist
D	Field Trip Emergency Procedures Checklist
E	Sample of Completed Risk Analysis Plan for Overnight Wilderness Trips (508-6)

A. INTRODUCTION

Educational Field Trips have many facets including, but not restricted to: neighbourhood studies; visits to buildings and sites of historical interest; museums, galleries, factories, zoos and farms; sporting and recreational activities; overnight excursions; and travel in Canada and to foreign countries.

B. EDUCATIONAL CRITERIA

When planning a Field Trip, the Teacher-in-Charge, in consultation with the Principal, must ensure that:

- a) it has curricular relevance for the group of students concerned;
- b) it has educational objectives that have been clearly defined by the Teacher, including pre-planning, follow-up activities and evaluation, where applicable;
- c) it has educational value in relation to the energy, effort, time and travel required by the program or activities;
- d) it is within the expertise of the supervisors;
- e) it lies within the competency and/or capability of the students involved;
- f) it is a permitted activity as outlined in Appendix A Activity Risk Chart, and
- g) the educational objectives are clearly communicated to the parents of the students involved.

C. SUPERVISION**1. General**

- a) Provision of adequate supervision is the responsibility of the Principal.

- b) Where several schools are involved in sharing transportation, supervision must be coordinated by the Principals.
- c) On overnight trips, if students of both genders are involved, the supervision of the group must include adults of both genders.
- d) When determining the supervision ratios, Principals will give special consideration to the physical, emotional, medical, and behavioural needs of any special needs students participating in the trip.

2. Supervision Ratios

- a) Supervision ratios are based on the number of Teachers/adult volunteers accompanying students. The bus driver is not included in the supervision ratios.
- b) The minimum supervision ratio should be exceeded whenever necessary to facilitate visual contact between supervisors and students and to accommodate students with special needs. It may also be exceeded when taking into consideration the nature of the activity including consideration of risks, or as mandated by the facility.
- c) A minimum of two supervisors should accompany any overnight trip.
- d) Minimum supervision ratios on a bus for Field Trips are:

K-8: minimum of 2 supervisors on a bus, and
Secondary: minimum of 1 supervisor per bus.
- e) When the recommended ratio has to be adjusted due to an emergency, contact the Principal for consultation to determine further action or changes necessary.
- f) If a building or location has been designated by the Principal as a regular off-site school campus, the supervision ratio may not apply, (e.g., local recreation centers, local parks and neighbourhood walks).

Minimum Supervision Required for Day Trips

Trips not requiring transportation		Trips requiring transportation	
Grade	Ratio	Grade	Ratio
		Kindergarten	1:6
Kindergarten	3:class	Grades 1-3	1:8
Grades 1-6	2:class	Grades 4-6	1:12
Grades 7-8	2:class	Grades 7-8	2:class or 1:15 for teams and clubs
Grades 9-12	1:class	Grades 9-12	1:class

Minimum Supervision Required for Overnight Trips

Grade	Ratio
Grades 4-6	1:8
Grades 7-8	1:12
Grades 9-12	1:15

Minimum Supervision Required for Overnight Camping Activities

Grade	Ratio
Grades 4-6	1:8
Grades 7-8	1:8
Grades 9-12	1:8

Minimum Supervision Required for Aquatics

Number of Swimmers	Ratio – Number of Lifeguards
1 - 25	1 lifeguard
26 - 50	1 lifeguard, 1 assistant
51 - 75	2 lifeguards, 1 assistant
76 - 150	2 lifeguards, 2 assistants
151-225	3 lifeguards, 2 assistants

3. Duties and Responsibilities of Supervisors

- a) Significant responsibility rests with the supervisor of an activity that takes students off school property.
- b) The duty of care to be provided by Teachers in supervisory positions is to assess risks as a prudent and reasonable person would, given the circumstances of the trip.
- c) The responsibility of the supervisor is to take reasonable steps to reduce the risks of injuries.
- d) This responsibility includes being prepared for emergencies and providing communication to parents as quickly as possible in the event of a health or safety concern for the student(s).
- e) Supervisors must ensure that they have pertinent student information and equipment in their possession at all times (e.g., medical information, First-Aid kit, telephone numbers, etc. (see Appendices B or C for checklist).
- f) An accurate attendance count must be taken at all points of departure.
- g) Staff members or volunteers will not consume any alcoholic beverages while on any Field Trips (day or overnight). The Teacher-in-Charge will ensure that adequate supervision is maintained.

4. Teachers

- a) Teachers are deemed by law to have authority over students by virtue of their positions as Teachers.
- b) Teachers are responsible for the supervision and safety of students during a Field Trip.
- c) Teachers are expected to ensure that students show the same standard of behaviour on Field Trips as is expected during in-school programs.

- d) Trip supervisors must include at least one certified Teacher employed by the Board.

D. STUDENT PARTICIPATION

1. Students eligible to participate in programs which are included in the curriculum should not be excluded because of special needs, health concerns, or lack of finances.
2. Principals shall make every effort to ensure that supports are in place to allow all students, including those with special needs to participate in Field Trips which are essential to curriculum.
3. If any special accommodations are needed to facilitate a student's participation, these shall be brought to the attention of the Teacher-in-Charge and shall be discussed with parents.
4. Students to be considered for a Field Trip (especially overnight) must have demonstrated a level of responsible behaviour appropriate for participation in the activity, as determined by the Principal.
5. If the **Parental Information/Consent Form 508-2** is not returned, the parent should be contacted and consent obtained and documented in writing and kept at the school.
6. Parents/guardians must be provided with the opportunity to excuse their children from any aspect of the program.
7. An alternate educational program will be provided for students who do not participate on a Field Trip.

E. HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. General
 - a) Health and Safety shall be given the highest priority for students and staff when planning and participating in Field Trips.
 - b) Attention to special health concerns of students is a required element of the planning process.

- c) One supervisor must have access to a communication device, cell phone, satellite phone, or appropriate means of communication.
- d) Students must be informed about how to contact the Teacher-in-Charge or supervisor on duty at any time during a Field Trip.
- e) Field Trips must be appropriate to the skill level and development of the students involved and must be properly supervised at all times.
- f) The Teacher-in-Charge, supervisors, and volunteers must instruct students in the appropriate safety procedures before participating in a Field Trip.
- g) The Teacher-in-Charge, supervisors, and volunteers must be aware of the pertinent sections in the Board's Policy #509 Health Support Services, regarding Board-recognized First-Aid Procedures, and life-threatening situations.
- h) The Teacher-in-Charge, supervisors, and volunteers must reference the Board's Policy #300 Emergency Procedures and Emergency Procedures School Handbook.
- i) The Teacher-in-Charge, supervisors, and volunteers must be aware of the location of appropriate medical and lifesaving equipment such as First-Aid kits, fire extinguishers, the location of the nearest hospital, the police station, and other sources of emergency assistance.
- j) The Teacher-in-Charge, or supervisors, must visit or consult with each new site prior to participation in a Field Trip. As part of this research, potential health and safety hazards must be identified and addressed in the planning for the trip.
- k) For an overnight wilderness trip, the Teacher-in-Charge or supervisor shall have completed a pre-trip visit within a recent period of time. This time frame will be influenced by the type of trip and the natural conditions present.

- l) Parents may request a modification of an activity or excuse their child from an activity.
- m) The inherent risk of the activity must be clearly explained on the **Parental Information/Consent Form 508-2** and must state: The risk of injury exists in every Field Trip activity. However, due to the very nature of some activities, accidents may occur while participating in these activities. The safety and well-being of students is a prime concern and attempts are made to manage the foreseeable risks inherent in Field Trip activities as effectively as possible. The activities listed below, and others, have inherent risks which are beyond the control of the Upper Grand District School Board, its employees or agents, or the facility where the activity is taking place. Participants must assume the inherent risks of the activity and liability should an accident/incident occur. Please note that not all risks associated with these and other activities have been listed.

Sample Activities

* Skiing, Snowboarding

* Skating

Swimming

Climbing Walls

International Trips

Wilderness Camping

Boating

Billeting

Inherent Risks

Broken bones, head injuries

Head and dental injuries

Drowning, head injuries

Back and spinal injuries

Related transportation risks including air flights, political unrest, threats of war or insurrection

Sunburn, insect bites/stings, drowning, strains and sprains

Drowning

Police Record Checks may not have been conducted or may not be confirmed for billeting families.

* It is strongly recommended that parents provide a CSA approved helmet for their child for skating. Helmets are mandatory for snowboarding and downhill skiing.

- n) The following resources must be consulted to determine specific health and safety needs: OPHEA's Physical Education Safety Guidelines (Elementary and Secondary), and the OSBIE and OSRA School Board/Snow Resort Safety Guidelines for Out-of-School Trips for Winter Sports Education Programs.

2. Medical and Emergency Information

- a) Pertinent medical and emergency information about each student can be obtained from the Student Admission and Information Form which is available through the Maplewood Database.

Teachers must also refer to the **Parental Information/Consent Form 508-2** for updated medical information.

- b) The supervisors for each group of students must carry two copies of the medical and emergency information for each student where there are two or more trip supervisors, a minimum of two supervisors must carry this information, and a Field Trip Emergencies Procedures Checklist (refer to Appendix D).
- c) If more than one vehicle is used to transport students on a Field Trip, the supervisor in each vehicle must carry the medical and emergency information for the students in that vehicle.
- d) The appropriate supervisor will carry the medication required for each student. Students requiring an EpiPen, should carry one on their person. Appropriate additional EpiPens will be carried by the supervisor.
- e) Staff members and volunteers are encouraged to disclose pertinent personal medical information as it pertains to the risks involved for the Field Trip, especially overnight trips.

3. First-Aid Procedures

- a) First-Aid kits must be available during all Field Trips.
- b) The provision of immediate First-Aid should be given by the appropriate supervisor nearest to the victim.
- c) For day trips, it is recommended that one supervisor have Board-recognized First-Aid training.
- d) On overnight Field Trips there must be at least one supervisor qualified in Board-recognized First-Aid procedures.
- e) In the event of an accident or illness of a student, medical treatment should be promptly sought and the school and parents/guardians notified as soon as possible. The OSBIE Incident Report Form must be completed at the first possible opportunity.

4. Student Accident Insurance

- a) The Board is empowered, under the Education Act, to make it known that accident insurance is available to its students.
- b) Purchase of accident insurance is voluntary, with the costs to be paid by the parents/guardians to the insurance company.
- c) The Board assumes no liability in connection with this insurance with respect to applications, premium payments or claims.
- d) Parents/guardians should be encouraged to consider this insurance for the protection of their children including those participating on school teams or on out-of-province Field Trips.
- e) Due to the high cost of health services in other countries, the Teacher-in-Charge must ensure that a health insurance policy that covers all students, staff and volunteers is included and provided through a travel agent or private carrier for Field Trips outside Ontario or Canada. The cost for this coverage should be included in the cost of the trip.

F. STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

- 1. Students participating in Field Trips must meet the same standards of behaviour which are required in the regular school setting, as outlined in the school's Code of Conduct. Students are also expected to observe the regulations established by the site they are visiting.
- 2. Students participating in Field Trips must be made aware of the consequences of unacceptable behaviour.
- 3. Parents must be notified in advance of serious behaviours that would compromise a student's participation in a Field Trip.
- 4. Students in serious violation of the school's Code of Conduct or Board policies, may, at the discretion of the Teacher-in-Charge, in consultation with the Principal, be sent home. Expenses incurred in sending students home shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

5. All incidents of this type must be reported by the Principal to the appropriate Superintendent of Education immediately. A decision may be made by the Principal regarding the need for further disciplinary action.

G. USE OF VOLUNTEERS

1. Schools are encouraged to make use of adult volunteers, who are at least eighteen (18) years of age to assist the Teacher-in-Charge with supervision on Field Trips.
2. All volunteers on Field Trips must complete a copy of the **Volunteer Agreement Form 205-1** and a copy must be kept on file in the school.
3. Volunteer supervisors must be provided with direction as to their responsibilities prior to departure.
4. Volunteer supervisors on an overnight trip must be at least eighteen (18) years of age, be accepted by the Principal, and must be thoroughly capable of handling the assigned duties.
5. The Teacher-in-Charge shall provide guidance and supervision to volunteers.
6. As supervisors on Field Trips, non-teacher volunteers must be treated with the same respect and courtesy as Teachers. Volunteers must refer disciplinary and safety concerns to the Teacher-in-Charge.
7. All community volunteers will provide a current (within the last year) Police Record Check to the Principal.
8. The Principal will use his/her discretion when requesting a Police Record Check from a parent or other close relative (grandparents, etc.) of a student attending the school. The Principal will assess the risk involved based on the extent of interaction with, and responsibility for, students and the degree of direct supervision of the volunteer. If the risk is medium to high, the Principal will request a Police Record Check.
9. On an overnight trip, a Police Record Check, obtained within the last year is required for all non-parent volunteers.

10. The Principal may seek assistance from Human Resources in adjudicating a Police Record Check.
11. The Board will not assume any cost involved in obtaining a Police Record Check.

H. TRIPS NOT REQUIRING TRANSPORTATION

1. Trips must be approved, in writing, by the Principal or Vice-Principal on the **Approval/Information Form 508-1**.
2. In order to allow time for notice to parents/guardians, where appropriate, it is recommended that approval on **Parental Information/Consent Form 508-2** be obtained at least two weeks in advance of the trip.
3. In some instances, grades 9-12 students will be required to walk to an off-school site without supervision. On these occasions, the **Parental Information/Consent Form 508-2** must be used to obtain consent from parents.
4. The Principal will advise parents/guardians, in writing, using the **Parental Information/Blanket Consent Form 508-7** as a blanket permission form that students will take short walking trips, from time to time, as part of the regular program of study.

I. TRANSPORTATION – GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The Teacher-in-Charge should refer to the pertinent sections of the Board's Transportation Policy # 304.
2. When transportation is required, school buses and/or public transportation should be used whenever possible.
3. Parents may opt out of school organized Field Trip transportation or arrange alternative transportation. Prior notification must be provided to the Teacher-in-Charge.
4. When privately-owned vehicles are used, drivers must have the authorization of the Principal, in writing, on the **Transportation of**

Students in Privately-Owned Vehicles Form 508-3, before transporting students.

5. All privately-owned vehicles must carry at least \$1,000,000 third party automobile liability insurance.
6. The Board requires that a driver transporting students must be at least eighteen (18) years of age and have a class G license. Drivers transporting students in a vehicle with a passenger capacity of 10 – 24 people must have a Class E license.
7. The Principal shall also ensure that:
 - a) the number of seatbelts installed in a privately-owned vehicle must match the number of students transported;
 - b) the number of students transported in a privately-owned vehicle is limited to five;
 - c) children under the age of twelve (12) years must not be transported in the front seat of a privately-owned vehicle equipped with air bags that cannot be disengaged, and
 - d) children between 18 and 36 Kg. (40 – 80 lbs.) with a standing height of less than 145 cm (4'9"), or a minimum age of eight (8) years must be transported in a booster seat in a privately-owned vehicle.
8. If students or Teachers/supervisors transfer from one vehicle to another, the passenger lists must be revised by the Teacher-in-Charge. The change must be reported to the Principal as soon as possible.
9. Vehicle passenger lists must be checked at each boarding.
10. Prior to departure, relevant information on weather and road conditions should be obtained from the Board's Transportation Department, the Ministry of Transportation, or Environment Canada. In cases of doubtful road or unpredictable weather conditions, the decision to suspend travel may be made by the Principal, Teacher-in-Charge or the driver.

11. In the event of a change in travel plans during the trip, the Principal and the parents/guardians must be advised as soon as possible.
12. Trip organizers should ensure that emergency transportation (911 service or a privately-owned vehicle) is available from the site. In a remote location, access to a privately-owned vehicle is recommended.

J. TRIPS REQUIRING TRANSPORTATION

1. All Field Trips must be approved, in writing, by the Principal or the Vice-Principal on the **Approval/Information Form 508-1** at least two weeks in advance of the trip.
2. In order to allow time for notice to parents/guardians, where appropriate, it is recommended that approval on **Parental Information/Consent Form 508-2** be obtained at least two weeks in advance of the trip.
3. The Principal may obtain one **Parental Information/Blanket Consent Form 508-7** per term or semester as a blanket permission form for a school team, band, or other group that travels regularly. A schedule of events will be attached to the form. Parents/guardians must be advised if changes to the schedule become necessary.
4. When transportation is provided by bus, there must be a minimum of two supervisors on a bus for grades JK-8 and one supervisor per bus for grades 9-12.
5. Where there are two or more trip supervisors, a minimum of two supervisors must carry the information listed below:
 - a) a list of the names of all students and supervisors in that vehicle, updated immediately prior to departure, and
 - b) medical and emergency information as appropriate for each student, staff supervisor, and volunteer in the vehicle.
6. Updated information must be provided to the Principal immediately prior to departure, including names of students and supervisors, destination and duration of the trip. It is recommended that bus identification e.g.,

bus number and driver name be submitted to the Principal with all relevant information.

7. The Principal must keep a list of students, supervisors and volunteers in each vehicle.

K. SUPERVISOR INSURANCE AND LIABILITY

1. On approved Field Trips, Teachers and volunteers are covered by the Board's liability insurance. Teachers are also covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.
2. When using a privately-owned or rental vehicle on approved Board business, a Teacher or volunteer's personal automobile liability insurance will be used for coverage of any award directed by the court against the individual.
3. In a judgment arising against an employee or volunteer resulting from use of their privately-owned vehicle on Board-approved business, the Board's liability policy comes into effect as excess insurance above the limit of the individual's personal automobile liability insurance.

L. LIABILITY INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. The Board expects that only event and service providers (e.g., vehicle, vessel, aircraft or facility) which carry public liability insurance will be used for all Field Trips.
2. As part of the planning process for any trip which requires Superintendent approval, valid public liability insurance should be confirmed for privately-owned service providers. At the discretion of the Superintendent, a copy of the Confirmation of Coverage Certificate may be requested.
3. It is assumed that all government or publicly-funded service providers or large corporations carry appropriate liability insurance.

M. SCHOOL- RELATED SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

1. On occasion, a small group of students may be permitted to attend school-related activities where Teacher supervision is not provided.

2. Principals will be responsible for granting permission for these activities.
3. On these occasions, the **Approval/Information Form 508-1**, **Parental Information/Consent Form 508-2** or the **Parental Information/Blanket Consent Form 508-7** must be completed. **Transportation of Students in Privately-Owned Vehicles Form 508-3** may need to be completed as well.
4. In secondary schools, where the activity is common to a specific course, notification should be given to students and parents/guardians in the course description in the Course Calendar.

N. OVERNIGHT TRIPS

An Overnight Trip is an excursion of one night or longer.

1. Approval/Communication Process

- a) When overnight trips are first contemplated, the Principal must consult with the appropriate Superintendent of Education who shall consider approval in principle.
- b) When planning an excursion, especially out-of-province or out-of-country, the existence of conditions such as the following must be checked prior to departure:
 - i. natural disaster (e.g., earthquake, flood, hurricane, tornado);
 - ii. war zone – imminent or existing, political or civil instability (e.g., civil war, terrorism), and
 - iii. health standards and hazards (e.g., any required immunizations).

If any of these conditions are present, the trip cannot proceed. Verifications of the above situations can be assessed through the Department of Foreign Affairs, the local Health Unit, and consultation with the Superintendent.

- c) Overnight trips must be approved, in writing, by the Principal or Vice-Principal and the appropriate Superintendent of Education at least two months prior to departure, on the **Approval/Information Form 508-1** as well as on the **Overnight Trip Approval Form 508-4**.
- d) At least one month prior to departure the Principal must ensure that a parents' meeting is held to obtain informed consent. The following information must be provided:
- i. educational objectives;
 - ii. proposed itinerary;
 - iii. the activities which may be undertaken, the risks involved, and how the risks will be minimized;
 - iv. supervision details;
 - v. the opportunity to excuse their children from any aspect of the program;
 - vi. the regulations regarding acceptable behaviour as outlined in Section "F" of this policy;
 - vii. the cost per student and the cost to the school, and
 - viii. the alternative educational program provided for students who do not participate in the overnight trip.
- e) The Teacher-in-Charge must obtain parental permission for each student to participate on the overnight trip on the **Parental Information/Consent Form 508-2**.
- f) The following detailed information should be submitted as early as possible to the appropriate Superintendent of Education, but no later than two months prior to the departure date:
- i. educational objectives;

- ii. detailed itinerary and activities, including telephone numbers for emergency use;
 - iii. supervision details;
 - iv. costs (per student);
 - v. sample copy of the **Parental Information/Consent Form 508-2**;
 - vi. **Approval/Information Form 508-1**;
 - vii. **Overnight Trip Approval Form 508-4**;
 - viii. copies of relevant certificates, e.g., Board-recognized First-Aid, swimming, canoeing, etc.,
 - ix. confirmation that privately-owned service providers carry adequate public liability insurance coverage (see Section “L” Liability Insurance Requirements);
 - x. confirmation of trip cancellation insurance and refund policy;
 - xi. provisions made for supervision and maintenance of academic programs for students/classes remaining at school, and
 - xii. any other relevant information.
- g) Provision for adequate supervision is the responsibility of the Principal. The minimum supervision ratio should be exceeded whenever necessary to facilitate visual contact between supervisors and students and to accommodate students with special needs.
- h) For an overnight trip contemplated at the grade four to grade six levels, the Principal must consult with the appropriate Superintendent of Education who shall consider approval. If approved, the supervision ratio for such a trip will be determined

by the Principal and the Superintendent, and shall be no less than 1 supervisor per 8 students.

- i) Where students of both sexes are on an overnight trip, supervisors of both sexes must accompany the group.

2. Billeting

- a) Information on the Billeting Program must be provided to parents in advance of the trip.
- b) At a minimum, the information provided to parents must include:
 - i. rationale for the billeting program;
 - ii. name, address and contact information (phone number, e-mail if available) of the agency or group organizing the billeting program;
 - iii. a copy of the organization's billeting policy, if available, and
 - iv. contact information for each family providing billeting for each student.

O. OVERNIGHT WILDERNESS PROGRAMS

This section applies to activities such as canoe trips in which the Teacher-in-Charge is responsible for both equipment and instruction. Wilderness camping is defined as traveling in groups by canoe, foot, snowshoe, ski, or other means through wilderness or semi-wilderness areas.

- 1. Where park regulations or other circumstances require that students split up into separate groups, each party must include at least one Supervisor with a current Board-recognized First-Aid certificate.
- 2. In all outdoor education programs, equipment must be checked by the Teacher-in-Charge and determined to be in good repair, and appropriate for the use intended.

3. All trips shall carry a communication device capable of initiating an emergency response (typically a cell or satellite phone).
4. Each trip supervisor shall have a water purification process if drinking water is obtained directly from lakes or rivers.
5. When organizing an overnight wilderness program the following additional items must be sent to the appropriate Superintendent of Education:
 - a) a detailed copy of the map showing the route, daily itinerary, specific lake names, portages, hiking trails and any other relevant information;
 - b) the names of all Teachers-in-Charge and copies of current certificates stating canoeing, swimming, Board-recognized First-Aid and other relevant qualifications;
 - c) **Aquatics Program Approval Form 508-5** (if relevant);
 - d) the date which the route was pre-tripped and by whom;
 - e) a brief outline of the student pre-trip preparation;
 - f) the date and place of the parents' meeting providing informed consent, and
 - g) the **Risk Analysis Plan For Overnight Wilderness Trips Form 508-6** and accompanying Risk Management strategies. See Appendix E for sample of completed Risk Analysis Plan for Overnight Wilderness Trips.

P. AQUATIC PROGRAMS

1. General

- a) Aquatic programs require special safety considerations. For any aquatic activity, **Aquatics Program Approval 508-5** must be completed and submitted to the appropriate Superintendent for approval, at least one month in advance of the trip.

- b) The Head Swim Instructor/Lifeguard must be informed of any child having: life-threatening allergies, a history of diabetes, asthma, heart conditions, convulsions, epilepsy, frequent ear infections or any other medical conditions that may affect the child's safety in water.
- c) Residential pools must not be used for any form of aquatic program.
- d) Emergency procedures must be outlined to students prior to entering the water.
- e) Other than medical alert jewelry, jewelry should not be worn in the water.
- f) A person with current Board-recognized First-Aid certification must be accessible.
- g) A First-Aid kit must be accessible.
- h) Standard safety equipment must be accessible at pool or water-side, e.g., signaling devices, reaching poles, spinal boards, throwing line(s), blankets, etc.
- i) On Field Trips involving aquatic activities, the Principal is responsible for ensuring that the policy regarding supervision ratio and qualifications for lifeguards is followed as outlined below:

Minimum Supervision Required for Aquatics

Number of Swimmers	Ratio – Number of Lifeguards
1 - 25	1 lifeguard
26 - 50	1 lifeguard, 1 assistant
51 - 75	2 lifeguards, 1 assistant
76 - 150	2 lifeguards, 2 assistants
151-225	3 lifeguards, 2 assistants

The minimum supervision ratio should be exceeded whenever necessary, taking into consideration the nature of the activity including consideration of risks.

2. Lifeguards

NOTE: The Board is phasing out OTAS as the lifeguard qualification for natural sites. NLS will become the mandatory qualification for lifeguards at natural sites by the 2012-13 school year. OTAS will still be adequate for an assistant lifeguard at a pool setting.

- a) Lifeguards must hold the National Lifeguard Service (NLS) certificate. If a Teacher is acting in a capacity as a lifeguard, the minimum qualification is the Ontario Teacher Aquatics Standards (OTAS).
- b) Assistant lifeguards must hold Life Saving Society Bronze Cross or Distinction Award.
- c) Students participating in the Field Trip may not be used as qualified lifeguards in determining the ratio for supervisors.

3. Pools

- a) When swimming in a public or private facility (e.g., hotel swimming pool) the Principal is responsible for ensuring that supervision ratios and qualifications for lifeguards are followed.
- b) Students must adhere to the following regulations:
 - no running or pushing on deck,
 - no gum chewing,
 - no food in pool area,
 - stay clear of diving area,
 - no diving from boards or areas higher than 2 meters,

- no shoes on deck, and
 - no students with infected cuts or sores in pool.
- c) Screening/testing must be done in the shallow end of the pool initially, by approved lifeguard at the site.
- d) Teachers must accompany students to the pool and be on the deck or in the pool.

4. Natural Sites

Note: Natural sites exclude pond and stream studies.

- a) This policy will cover:
- i. Swimming at natural sites in any setting: e.g., lakes during canoe trips or camp visits, and
 - ii. any non-powered watercraft activity either during a canoe trip, camp visit, or at any chosen location.

b) **Swimming Assessment**

Prior to any Field Trip involving aquatic activities at a natural site, students will participate in a swimming assessment. Each student will be assessed on the following:

- i. Disorienting entry: Students will be taught how to put on and fit a Canadian-approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD). Students will then do a front roll into deep water fully clothed and wearing a PFD. Fully clothed is defined as a long sleeved shirt, long pants, and closed-toe shoes.
- ii. HELP (Heat Escape Lessening Position) position in water for one minute.
- iii. Swim 20 meters fully clothed and with a PFD on. (Numbers i, ii, and iii may be combined – students put on PFDs, perform disorienting entry, get in the HELP position for one minute and then swim fully clothed for 20 meters).

- iv. Swim 60 meters in a bathing suit.
 - v. Tread water for 5 minutes.
- c) All staff and volunteers must be made aware of the swimming levels of each student. Refer to swimming assessment chart following.

Swimming Assessment Levels		
Level	Criteria	Results
4	Student completed all aspects of the assessment and demonstrated competent swimming and aquatic skill.	Student may participate in all activities.
3	Student completed all aspects of the assessment and demonstrated weak swimming and aquatic skills.	Student may participate in all activities.
2	Student was not able to complete all aspects of the assessment. Student did complete the assessment with an appropriately sized Canadian Approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) and demonstrated confidence and calmness in the water.	Student may participate in all boating activities and <u>must wear a PFD during any swimming activity.</u>
1	Student was not able to complete all aspects of the assessment. Student was not able to complete the assessment with a PFD or demonstrated panic and discomfort in the water.	Student <u>may NOT participate</u> in any natural site aquatic activity.

- d) Special arrangements may be considered for exceptional students with the written permission of the Superintendent of Education.
- e) The "buddy system" must be practiced during all swimming activities.

- f) The swimming area must be clearly designated or marked, be free of hazards, of suitable water temperature and be reasonably clean and clear.
- g) The Teacher-in-Charge must have clear indication from the camp that it is able to perform the standard swimming assessment as outlined in this policy.
- h) The duration of the swim should depend on the ability of swimmers, weather conditions, the condition of the water, and the time of the day.
- i) Students must practice an emergency water drill upon arrival at the water site. (Students will assemble on shore at a designated site upon hearing three loud whistle blasts.)
- j) These rules shall be reinforced with students who are participating in aquatic programs at natural sites:
 - i. no swimming after dark or before dawn;
 - ii. students must remain in an area within their own ability to swim to shore and within the ability of the lifeguards to perform a rescue;
 - iii. no distance swimming;
 - iv. no diving during wilderness trips;
 - v. no swimming in fast moving rivers or streams;
 - vi. no swimming from canoes or watercraft (no gunnel bobbing);
 - vii. no swimming if there are any indications of threatening weather;
 - viii. students should wear shoes when uncertain of the bottom, and

- ix. students must not rely on a flotation device unless it is a properly worn Canadian-Approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD).

5. Boating

1. Non-Powered Watercraft (canoes, kayaks and rowboats, etc.)

- a) Each student must wear a Canadian-Approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) of appropriate size.
- b) Each watercraft must meet safety standards set by the Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans as outlined in its Safe Boating Guide Manual.
- c) Students must participate in the swim assessment as outlined above prior to taking part in boating training sessions or activities.
- d) For day and overnight canoe trips, there must be a designated trip supervisor who is Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association (ORCA) Level II certified or equivalent. There must also be a second supervisor who is ORCA Level I certified. One adult must be qualified in Board-recognized First-Aid procedures. One adult must have lifeguard qualifications as outlined in Section "P" 2.
- e) Before participating in a day or overnight canoe trip students will receive instruction in:
 - i. entries and exits;
 - ii. safety including rescue techniques and travel formation;
 - iii. basic strokes;
 - iv. transportation/lifts and portaging, and
 - v. maintenance and care of equipment.

- f) When students are participating in a residential camp boating program (boating takes place in a defined area, supervised by camp staff, often by shore or by a small motor boat), the camp shall be O.C.A. (Ontario Camping Association) accredited and adhere to the safety guidelines set out by that association. These O.C.A. standards shall satisfy the Board's requirements for safety guidelines in this case. When a residential camp facility is not O.C.A. accredited, the leaders must meet the required qualifications for Overnight Wilderness Programs as outlined in this policy.
 - g) Where park regulations or other circumstances require that the group be split into separate parties, each group must have the following certifications: lifeguard qualifications, ORCA Level I and Board-recognized First-Aid. Each group must also carry a First-Aid kit.
 - h) White water (gravity driven) boating is not permitted. If whitewater is encountered on a trip, it shall be portaged. Boating on lakes with large whitecaps (wind driven) shall be avoided at all times.
2. Powered Watercraft (tour boats, ferries, etc.,)
- a) All powered watercraft must meet safety and inspection standards set by Transport Canada for the size and type of vessel.
 - b) All powered watercraft must carry appropriate liability insurance coverage (see Section "L").
 - c) All powered watercraft must carry the necessary lifesaving equipment, including PFDs, in the correct sizes, for all the adults and students on the trip.
 - d) All powered watercraft operators should carry children's PFDs in appropriate numbers for use by all students under 40 kg that will be travelling on the trip.

- e) Safety instruction should be provided by the powered watercraft operator.
- f) Students shall not operate any powered watercraft.

Q. DOWNHILL SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING

1. All ski facilities must be members of Ontario Ski Resorts Association (OSRA). The OSBIE and OSRA School Board/Snow Resort Safety Guidelines for Out-of-School Trips for Winter Sports Education Programs must be consulted.
2. Prior to the start of the activity, ski resort staff will verify students' abilities (beginner/novice, experienced, advanced) by a visual assessment of performance.
3. The Teacher-in-Charge will, along with the ski resort staff, emphasize to the students that once they receive permission to use specified slopes or trails, they must not go to slopes or trails beyond their ability.
4. All safety guidelines shall be taught to the students who will be participating in ski/snow activities prior to the start of the activity.
5. Helmets are mandatory for snowboarding and downhill skiing.
6. In addition to the school's Code of Conduct, all students must follow the rules of the resort. Non compliance may result in loss of privileges.