

	POLICY NO: 6.4
Adopted	2019
Projected Review Date	2030
Revisions	2019, 2026

POLICY: EDUCATIONAL EXCURSIONS

PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) believes that an equitable quality education includes the opportunity for all students to participate in educational excursions. HWDSB values the connection between educational excursions and the curriculum in extending and enriching the educational experience to assist students in their learning.

HWDSB further affirms that educational excursions must prioritize student well-being and safety, including both physical and emotional safety, through proactive planning and clear communication.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Every student is provided an opportunity to participate in educational excursions as appropriate.
- Every educational excursion should provide the opportunity to explore diverse cultures, the local community and beyond.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that equitable inclusion is incorporated in the planning and execution of all excursions in accordance with the HWDSB *Human Rights Policy 1.1* and *Equity and Inclusion Policy 5.4*.
- Educational excursions recognize the central role of local context, including access to land-based learning and cultural experiences that promote Indigenous Educational Wellness and Reconciliation.
- Every educational excursion is age-appropriate, and meets Board policies, procedures, Ontario curriculum expectations and adheres to safety guidelines.
- Clear, timely, and transparent communication with parents, guardians, and caregivers is an essential component of all educational excursions.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

The implementation of the Educational Excursions Policy together with specific related procedures will:

- Ensure that educational excursions are accessible to all students, with barriers identified and addressed through intentional planning and system supports.
- Promote consistency and equity of opportunity for educational excursions across classrooms and schools.

- Ensure educational excursions are directly aligned with Ontario curriculum expectations and HWDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.
- Strengthen student well-being by ensuring excursions are planned and supported to protect physical safety and emotional safety through anticipatory planning and communication.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Chief Executive Officer

TERMINOLOGY:

Educational excursion: A structured learning experience that occurs within and outside the school building and is intentionally designed to enhance and enrich the overall learning experience for students while linked to the curriculum and/or HWDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

ACTION REQUIRED:

The Board shall establish and maintain a procedure for educational excursions that outlines roles and responsibilities, communication requirements, planning expectations, consent processes, and measures to support student safety, well-being, equity, and inclusion.

Educational excursions must demonstrate clear educational purpose and curriculum alignment, with transparent communication to students and families.

- Students must receive age-appropriate pre-excursion learning and preparation.
- Written informed consent from parents/guardians/caregivers is required for all excursions.

Excursions must be planned using approved Board processes and tools that address risk management, safety, accessibility, supervision, transportation, funding, and contingency planning.

- Planning must proactively identify and address barriers to participation, ensuring equitable access for all students.

The Board will implement monitoring and continuous improvement processes including feedback from staff to evaluate excursion planning, approval, and implementation.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Ensure all educational excursions are accessible to every student and staff and directly aligned to Ontario curriculum expectations and/or HWDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.	Principals will confirm, as part of the excursion approval process, that each proposed excursion demonstrates clear alignment to Ontario curriculum expectations and/or the HWDSB Multi-Year Strategic

	Plan. Alignment will be documented using Board-approved planning and approval tools. Principals, and where appropriate superintendents, will review accessibility and inclusion requirements of Educational Excursions during the approval process of each excursion.
Promote consistency and equity of opportunity for educational excursions across classrooms and schools.	Principals will provide oversight to ensure schools take a coordinated, school-wide approach to educational excursions, and that approval practices are applied consistently across classrooms. Superintendents will periodically review excursion patterns and approvals to monitor equity of opportunity across schools.
Ensure that educational excursions are accessible to all students, with barriers identified and addressed through intentional planning and system supports.	Principals, supported by superintendents, will review excursion plans during the approval process to confirm that barriers to participation have been identified and addressed through planning, accommodation, or system supports. Evidence of this review will be documented through established approval and planning tools.
Strengthening student well-being by ensuring excursions are planned and supported to protect physical safety and emotional safety through anticipatory planning and communication.	Principals will verify that excursion plans include documented risk management strategies, proactive communication with families, and appropriate student preparation to support physical safety and emotional well-being. Superintendents will periodically review a sample of approved excursions to monitor consistency and identify areas for improvement.

REFERENCES:

Government Documents

Education Act—Part VI BOARDS, Duties & Powers

Education Act Regulation 298 OPERATION OF SCHOOLS – GENERAL

Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools (Ministry of Education – 2010)

Ontario Human Rights Code

Ontario Curriculum

Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSAA) Regulations Ontario Physical and Health

Education Association (OPHEA) Guidelines Ontario School Boards' Insurance Exchange (OSBIE)

Highway Traffic Act - Section 32 – Licensing

Revisions:

Policy Review and template migration, April 2026