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MCS Outdoor Pursuits Off-Site Camping & Backpacking Guidelines

MCS Outdoor Education trips are currently conducted and guided by the following policy documents:

1. Administrative Procedure 260 (AP 260). **Field Trips**. Foothills School Division #38.
2. Alberta Education (2008) **Safety Guidelines For Physical Activity in Alberta Schools**. Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research. (specific references p 74 -76 Outdoor Education Camping & Backpacking)

Principal will:

- ensure trips at MCS adhere to **all guidelines** and policy procedures in AP 260 & Safety Guidelines For Physical Activity in Alberta Schools documentation.
- assemble all students prior to each Outdoor Pursuits trip and clearly outline and reemphasize safety expectations / procedures and consequences to students should those expectations not be adhered to.
- assemble all supervising adults prior to the trip to ensure they clearly understand the roles and responsibilities of supervision for the off-campus activity
- ensure that the teacher-in-charge consults with principal to shorten, cancel or terminate an off-site activity at any time if, in the opinion of the teacher-in-charge, the off-site activity cannot proceed or be completed in a safe or satisfactory manner
- ensure copies of maps, day trip routes, emergency contacts, copies of trip documents and pre-planned communication times with Satellite phone and SPOT check system are on whiteboard in Principals office for each trip .
- ensure that during pre-trip instruction the teacher-in-charge has provided students with copies of the expectations and guidelines for trip supervision, safety, and communication. Further, that students clearly understand their role in abiding by these expectations.

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Teacher-in-charge & Chaperones will:

- adhere to all Supervision directives outlined in Foothills School Division #38 AP 260.
- adhere to supervision expectations from Safety Guidelines For Physical Activity in Alberta Schools (below).

OUTDOOR EDUCATION -

BACKPACKING AND DAY HIKING



All Physical
Activities
pg. 11-17



Outdoor Activities

Outdoor Education - Backpacking and Day Hiking

(Day trips from school or base camp)

Suitable for Grades 5-12

The following sections must also be consulted:

All Physical Activities and Outdoor Activities and Outdoor Education Activities and Off-site Activities.

Supervision

- On-site supervision is recommended following initial skill instruction and after all safety concerns have been emphasized.
- Suggested 1:10 ratio of qualified instructors to students.
- A leader should be assigned to the front and back of the group. A leader could be a responsible student. The supervisor(s) can move along the group from front to back.
- The front and back of the group should be within whistle contact of the supervisor(s) at all times.
- Teacher should designate regular rendezvous check sites.
- Route cards should be left with school or other supervising body with emergency contacts and response system planned and in place.

- ensure that on all day hikes the group travels as one group at all times. They will ensure that groups do not split into smaller sub-groups to take alternate routes from the planned activity.
- ensure all All day hikes will be on pre-determined clearly marked hiking trails that have been scouted out by the Teacher-in-charge prior to the trip. Alternate routes will not be determined once the trip has commenced.
- assign numbering 'count-off' system for all students where each student is assigned a number for the trip and roll call is performed at Rendezvous points by having kids call out their designated number.

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- ensure that on day hikes students group always configures between assigned **adult** leader at front and back of full group.
- assign each supervising adult a **home** group of students to check-in with at designated Rendezvous points on excursions, at camp, and other appropriate pre-determined times (bed time, morning etc...)
- develop, at the outset of the trip, a student buddy system. Students are to check-in with their buddy at designated Rendezvous points on excursions, at camp, and other appropriate pre-determined times (bed time, morning etc...)
- ensure that whistles are used only for emergency calls (like a fire drill in school) and that they are carried at all times with all students and supervisors.