



# ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION SAFETY GUIDELINES (Policy Statement: Risk Management Physical and Athletic Safety Guidelines)

#### Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to focus teachers' attention on safe instructional practices for each activity (curricular, interschool and intramural), in order to minimize the inherent element of risk. By implementing safe practices the educator will guard against foreseeable risks.

#### References

*The Education Act and Regulations*  
*Ontario Safety Guidelines for Physical Education*

#### Procedures

##### **1.0 Curricular Guidelines:**

The following delineates minimum guidelines that must be met by physical educators and administrators in addressing the safety component of the physical education core program. This section focuses on classroom instruction in physical education.

##### **1.1 GENERIC ISSUES**

It should be recognized that there are many common guidelines of safety which apply to all class activities. Some such commonalities are as follows:

- a) At the beginning of the school year, teachers must become aware of the medical background and physical limitations of their students. This includes knowledge of students with heart disorders, asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, severe allergies, etc. Each school must develop a process by which medical information is available to teachers; e.g., family, information forms **or** students complete a medical information sheet the first day of classes (see Form A).

- b) A fully-stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible to the gymnasium. For a sample listing of first aid items, see Appendix 1. When activities are offered off campus, an appropriate, portable first aid kit must be readily accessible. An emergency action plan to deal with accidents in physical education must be developed in all schools. For details on an emergency action plan, see Appendix 2.
- c) Prior to teaching the skills of the activity, the teacher must: outline the possible risks of the activity (warnings of possible dangers), demonstrate how to minimize the risks, and set procedures and rules for safe play.
- d) Teachers must inform their students of the locations of the fire alarms, the fire exits and alternate routes from the gymnasium.
- e) Many different situations may arise involving the transportation of students away from the school for activities. It is important that parents are made aware of the mode of transportation and student expectations. The means and frequency of communication required must be established with the school principal. A signed parent/guardian acknowledgement/permission form must be received from each participant. The form must contain details of the activity and its inherent risks. Consideration must also be given to informing parents when students are involved in activities which take them off the immediate school property, e.g. cross-country running. Refer to the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board Field Trip Administrative Procedures related to the need for obtaining parent/guardian permission.
- f) If students are involved in any activity or sport (e.g. a low organization game) which is not described in this guideline, refer to the guidelines of an activity that it most resembles.
- g) Approval from the appropriate school board official must be received if a teacher wishes to include activities different from this document or board guidelines, and/or wishes to modify guidelines listed herein. As part of this process, the teacher must demonstrate that all appropriate precautions will be taken in the interest of student safety.
- h) Where an incident occurs that increases or could increase the risk of injury, corrective actions must take place to help prevent its reoccurrence.
- i) Many activities address the issue of body contact, stick on body contact and stick on stick contact. In an effort to promote a common understanding of the term, this document views contact as intentional contact with the purpose of gaining an advantage in the specific activity.
- j) At the beginning of the school year/semester, teachers must instruct students in appropriate changeroom conduct as well as emphasize the need to change quickly and proceed to the gym.

## 1.2 SPECIFIC COMPONENTS:

### a) Guidelines:

Guidelines for each class activity are outlined according to the following critical components: Equipment/Special Rules/Instruction/ Clothing/Footwear/Supervision Facilities.

### b) Equipment:

- Helmets must be worn during skating, skiing or snow boarding activities.
- When using any equipment that is not described in the document, care must be taken to ensure that it is safe for use, (e.g. no sharp edges, cracks, or splinters) and that it is size, mass and strength appropriate.
- All balls must be properly inflated.
- No home-made equipment is to be used, e.g. personal hockey sticks, floor hockey shafts, plastic *bleach bottle* scoops. Equipment can be made at school by Board employees, adult volunteers and by students who are under direct supervision.
- If students are permitted to bring their own equipment (e.g. badminton racquets, skis, in-line skates), students in consultation with teacher/coach must ensure that the equipment is in good working order and suitable for personal use.

### c) Clothing and Footwear:

- Students must wear appropriate clothing for physical education classes. Shorts or sweat pants, T-shirt, and running shoes should be a minimum uniform requirement. Some ill-fitting clothing, scarves, jewelry, hard-soled shoes and socks without shoes can inhibit movement and possibly cause injury during active movement. Where cultural dress presents a safety concern, modifications to the activity must be made.
- Hanging jewelry must not be worn. Jewelry which cannot be removed and which presents a safety concern (e.g. medical alert identification, religious/cultural jewelry) must be taped. Deviations from this minimum are listed on activity sheets. Long hair must be secured so as not to block vision.
- Parents/guardians and students must be made aware of safety precautions with eyeglasses including the need for an eyeglass strap and/or shatterproof lenses for some activities.

### d) Facilities

- To provide a safe environment for class activities the teacher must make a pre-activity check of the facilities and equipment to be used. The minimum requirement is a pre-use visual check. Hazards must be identified and removed as a factor in the

activity. Potentially dangerous and immovable objects (e.g. goalposts, protruding stage) must be brought to the attention of students and administration. All equipment must be checked regularly to ensure it is in good working order. Equipment listed in the document applies only to safety. Students must be encouraged to report equipment or facility problems to the teachers. For more information on the role of the student in safety, see Appendix 3.

- Facilities and major equipment must be inspected and a written report completed by a reputable third party on a regular basis.
- Equipment/furniture which is hazardous to the activity must not be stored around the perimeter of the gymnasium. A reasonable number of benches as well as mats secured to the wall are exceptions to this statement.
- For all indoor activities, walls and stages must not be used for turning points for finish lines. A line or pylon could be designated in advance of the wall. Foreseeable risks must be identified and precautions taken to minimize risks.
- Playing fields must be free from hazards, e.g. holes, glass, and rocks. Severely uneven surfaces must be brought to the attention of the principal and students must be made aware of them. There must be sufficient turf for proper traction and impact absorption for activities such as non-contact rugby.

e) Special Instructions:

- Class activity must be modified according to the age and ability levels of students and the facility available. Teachers must stay current with respect to safe exercise technique. All class sessions must include appropriate warm-ups and cool-downs. Skills must be taught in a proper progression. Games and activities must be based on skills that have been taught. Before involving students in strenuous outdoor activity, teachers must take into consideration the outside temperature, previous training and the length of time the students will be vigorously active.
- Modify activities which involve students with physical handicaps such as, in wheelchairs to address safety issues of all participants.

f) Supervision:

- Supervision is the overseeing of an activity for regulation or direction. All facilities, equipment and activities have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become.
- Students must be aware that the use of equipment and the gymnasium are prohibited without the appropriate type of supervision. Deterrents must be in place, for example:
  - locked doors;
  - signs on doors indicating that students are not to use the gym unless supervised;
  - staff scheduled and present in an adjoining physical education office, in order to see students entering the gym without authorization (secondary).

- Any use of a facility must be supervised.
- This guideline has designated three categories of supervision: “Constant visual”, “On-site”, and “In-the-area”. The categories are based on the principles of general and specific supervision which take into consideration the risk level of the activity, the participants’ skill level and the participants’ maturity.

In the category of supervision, “Constant visual” supervision means that the teacher is physically present, watching the activity in question. Only one activity requiring “Constant visual” supervision may take place while other activities are going on. “On-site” supervision entails teacher presence but not necessarily constantly viewing one specific activity. “In-the-area” supervision means that the teacher could be in the gymnasium while another activity is taking place nearby the gymnasium.

Example: During a track and field session, some students are involved in high jump, some are practicing relay passing on the track while a third group is distance running around the school.

- “Constant visual” supervision - High Jump - Teacher is at high jump area and is observing the activity.
- “On-site” supervision - Relay Passing - Students are practicing on the track and can be seen by the teacher who is with the high jumpers.
- “In-the-area” supervision - Distance Running - Students are running around the school grounds and at times may be out of sight.

#### Supervision - Points to Consider

- Establish routines, rules of acceptable behaviour and appropriate duties of students at the beginning of the year and reinforce throughout the year. Teachers must sanction students for unsafe play or unacceptable behaviour, and must exercise that responsibility at all times. Refer to Appendix 3 for more information on student behaviour.
- Students must be made aware of the rules of activities or games. Rules must be strictly enforced and modified to suit the age and physical ability of the participants.
- The teacher must be vigilant to prevent one student from pressuring another into trying skills or activities for which he or she is not ready.
- When a student displays hesitation verbally or non-verbally, the teacher should discuss the reason(s) for doubt. If the teacher believes that a potential hesitancy during the skill could put the student at a risk, the student must be directed toward a more basic skill.
- Co-op or senior students must not be the sole supervisor of an activity.
- On-Calls and Supply Teacher Coverage:

- ◆ The supply teacher must have students participate in activities that are commensurate with his/her experience or qualifications.
- ◆ The supply teacher should do a pre-visual check for hazards.
- ◆ Inform supply teacher or on-call teacher of the whereabouts of a contact teacher or administrator in case of an emergency.
- ◆ Specify restrictions/modifications for students with health or behavioural problems.

## 2.0 Interschool Guidelines:

The document sets out minimum guidelines to be used by coaches and administrators in addressing the safety component of interschool athletics. Interschool athletics is defined as the school-sponsored, competitive sports program which:

- occurs outside the student's instruction time;
- involves a selected school team/group;
- involves a competition against other outside teams/groups.

\*Note: Teachers or other Board employees such as E.A.'s or custodians are recognized as coaches and can supervise as long as:

1. they are informed regarding the expectations and rules of the sport, coaching skills, appropriate discipline of students and appropriate policies and procedures.
2. Are permitted under the guidelines of the competition.
3. Accept responsibility for supervision of students.
4. They are volunteers.
5. Coaching does not interfere with regular duties.

## 2.1 GENERIC ISSUES:

Please note: Lists of examples in these guidelines are not exclusive. It should be recognized that there are common safety guidelines which apply to all interschool athletics. Some such commonalities are as follows:

- a) Prior to the student's first practice, coaches must be aware of the medical background and physical limitations of their team-tryout members. This includes knowledge of students with heart disorders, asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, severe allergies, etc. Each school must develop a process by which this medical information is shared with the coach. The coach must have student athletes' medical information available at all practices and all games (see Form A).
- b) Prior to the first practice, parents must be made aware of the risks inherent in participation in sport participation and must sign and return an Athletic Consent Form (see Form B).
- c) Each school must appoint a teacher or administrator who is responsible for the interschool athletic program, to ensure that each coach is familiar with school's/board's coaching philosophy and relevant documents.

- d) If a student misses a practice/game due to an injury or illness requiring professional medical attention (e.g. medical doctor, chiropractor, physiotherapist, etc.), the coach must receive communication from a medical professional or the student's parent/guardian, giving permission to return to play. For sample form, see Form C "Request to Resume Athletic Participation".
- e) Apply your school's Emergency Action Plan to deal with accidents in interschool athletics. For details on an emergency action plan, see Appendix 2.
- f) An appropriately stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible. When activities are offered off campus, an appropriate portable first aid kit must be available. For a sample listing of first aid items, see Appendix 1.
- g) Universal precautions (e.g. using impermeable gloves) must be followed when dealing with situations involving blood and other bodily fluids (see Appendix 6). Coaches must refer to Board and other policies that address blood and bodily fluid procedures (e.g. sport governing body, OFSAA, association regulations).
- h) Before involving students in strenuous outdoor athletics, coaches must take into consideration the temperature of the day, previous training and the length of time the students will be vigorously active.
- i) At the beginning of the sport season, coaches must instruct students in expected conduct (i.e. in changerooms, when visiting schools).
- j) If students are involved in an interschool sport which is not described in this document, refer to sport governing body guidelines. Determine whether this sport/activity is higher or lower risk (see criteria section) and establish procedures accordingly.
- k) The presence of spectators must not present a safety concern.
- l) Game officials must be knowledgeable about the rules of the sport.
- m) Athletes must have a student Accident Insurance Policy.
- n) Coaches must be aware of and adhere to the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board Field Trip Policy and Administrative Procedures regarding interschool team travel (board sponsored and private vehicles). Parents/guardians must be informed of the mode of transportation and the student expectations required.
- o) Where an incident occurs that increases or could increase the risk of injury, corrective actions must take place to help prevent its reoccurrence.
- p) Interschool athletics have been categorized into two areas: higher risk sports and lower risk sports. Higher risk sports are those sports which are characterized by:
  - a greater potential for injuries with severe consequences;
  - contact: person to person and person to equipment;

- uniqueness of equipment used;
- speed of action;
- protective equipment used;
- type of supervision required;
- training required.

## 2.2 SECONDARY - INTERSCHOOL/OUT OF SCHOOL ATHLETICS:

<b>HIGHER RISK SPORTS</b>		<b>LOWER RISK SPORTS</b>	
Archery	Broomball (Ice)	Badminton	Baseball
Cheerleading (Acrobatic)	Cycling/Mountain Biking	Basketball	Bowling
Diving	Fencing	Bowling	Cheerleading (Spirit, Dance)
Field Hockey	Football	Cricket	Cross-Country Running/Orienteering
Gymnastics	Ice Hockey	Cross-Country Skiing	Curling
Lacrosse (Field, Box)	Rugby	Football (Flag, Touch)	Golf
Skiing (Alpine)/Snowboarding	Swimming/Synchronized Swimming	Handball (Wall)	Lawn Bowling
Track and Field: field events; javelin, shot-put, discus, high jump, pole vault		Racquetball	
Triathlon	Water Polo	Softball/Slo-Pitch	Soccer
Weightlifting	Wrestling	Squash	Table Tennis
<i>Canoeing</i>	<i>Rock/Wall Climbing</i>	Team Handball	Tennis
<i>Rowing</i>		Track and Field – track events, long jump, triple	
		Volleyball	

- a) For higher risk sports, these additional requirements must be met:
- It is the responsibility of the HOST school to ensure that first aid coverage is available throughout the entirety of any higher risk activities or performances (e.g. acrobatic cheerleading).
  - The minimum requirement for first aid coverage at a game or practice is the presence of an individual who takes responsibility for providing first aid to injured athletes.
  - Game/match officials must be certified and/or experienced in officiating the sport.
  - Coaching expertise for any higher risk sport must be derived from at least one of the following:
    - NCCP Level One Technical in that sport;
    - Attendance at a clinic or workshop in that sport within the last three years;
    - Past experience as a player or coach in that sport.
  - The coach must document athlete attendance and all practice plans with reference to progressive development of skills and attention paid to identified inherent risks of the sport (see Appendix 4).



## 2.3 ELEMENTARY – INTERSCHOOL/OUT OF SCHOOL ATHLETICS

HIGHER RISK SPORTS	LOWER RISK SPORTS	
Broomball (Ice)	Badminton	Ball Hockey
Cheerleading (Acrobatic)	Basketball	Bowling
Field Hockey	Cheerleading (Spirit, Dance)	Cricket
Gymnastics	Curling	Cross-Country Running/Orienteering
Ice Hockey	Cross-Country Skiing	Football(Flag, Touch)
Lacrosse (Field)	Golf	Handball (Wall)
Ringette (Ice)	Lacrosse (Soft)	Racquetball
Skiing (Alpine)/Snowboarding	Skiing	Softball/Slo-Pitch
Swimming	Soccer	Team Handball
Track and Field – field events: high jump, shot put	Tennis	
Canoeing	Track and Field – all track events, field events: hurdles, long jump, triple jump	
Wrestling	Volleyball	
<i>Rock/Wall Climbing</i>		

- a) For higher risk sports, these additional requirements must be met:
- It is the responsibility of the HOST school to ensure that first aid coverage is available throughout the entirety of any higher risk activities or performances (e.g. acrobatic cheerleading).
  - The minimum requirement for first aid coverage at a game or practice is the presence of an individual who takes responsibility for providing first aid to injured athletes.
  - Coaching expertise for any higher risk sport must be derived from at least one of the following:
    - NCCP Level One Technical in that sport;
    - attendance at a clinic or workshop in that sport within the last three years;
    - past experience as a player or coach in that sport.
  - The coach *should* document athlete attendance and all practice plans, with reference to progressive development of skills, and attention paid to identified inherent risks of the sport (see Appendix 4).

## 2.4 SPECIFIC COMPONENTS:

### a) Guidelines:

Guidelines for each activity are outlined according to the following critical components: Equipment/ Special Rules/ Instruction/ Clothing/ Footwear/ Supervision/ Facilities. These guidelines are mandatory for practices as well as games. An activity must not occur unless these guidelines have been addressed.

b) Equipment: (with respect to safety issues and concerns)

- When using any equipment, care must be taken to ensure that it is safe for use (e.g. no sharp edges, sharp corners, cracks, or splinters) and that it is size, mass and strength appropriate.
- All balls must be properly inflated.

Personal Equipment

- Students and parents must be made aware that equipment brought from home for use in interschool sporting activities must be in safe playing condition (e.g. hockey helmets, racquets, golf clubs, hockey sticks, etc.).
- Parents and athletes must be made aware of safety precautions with mouth guards and eyeglasses, including the need for an eyeglass strap and shatterproof lenses for some activities.
- Where sport governing bodies, and/or local/regional/provincial athletic associations require specific personal equipment (e.g. throat protector in hockey), parents/guardians and students will provide equipment that conforms to recognized standards.
- Where school boards or schools provide protective equipment, all equipment must conform to recognized standards (e.g. CSA approved hockey helmets) and must fit properly.
- Personal equipment must not be altered beyond the adjustments provided for in the original equipment. Any alteration that compromises the protection that the equipment provides destroys the safety certification (e.g. cutting a portion off the back of mouth guards).
- Student athletes must be informed that they are not to share water bottles.
- Students must be informed that they have a responsibility to report personal equipment problems and defects to the supervising coach.

Non-Personal Equipment

- All equipment must be checked regularly by the coach to ensure that it is in good working order. Athletes also must be encouraged to report equipment problems to coaches.
- Equipment needs to be inspected and maintained on a regular basis by capable and knowledgeable personnel (e.g. inspection company, Board Health and Safety Committee) and documentation maintained.

- Coaches must perform a visual check of equipment before each practice and competition and remove or repair broken equipment.
- When borrowing, renting, or lending equipment for practice or competition (e.g. wrestling mats, lane ropes, gymnastic equipment), the coach must ensure that equipment conforms to recognized safety standards and that it has been inspected for safety.

c) Clothing and Footwear:

- Students must wear appropriate clothing for interschool athletics. Prescribed team uniforms and clothing for practice must be appropriate for the activity and must not present a safety concern. Devices used to tie back long hair must not present a safety concern.
- Hanging jewelry must not be worn. Jewelry which cannot be removed and which presents a safety concern (e.g. medical alert identification, religious/cultural jewelry) must be taped or covered.

d) Facilities:

- To provide a safe environment for interschool athletics, the convenor/coach must make a pre-activity check of the facilities to be used. This could be done visually. Hazards must be identified and removed as a factor in the activity. Potentially dangerous and immovable objects (e.g. goalposts, protruding stage, bleachers, benches) must be brought to the attention of students, coaches, officials, etc. Students also must be encouraged to report facility problems to the coach. For more information on the role of the student in safety, see Appendix 3.
- For all indoor activities, walls and stages must not be used as turning points or finish lines. A line or pylon could be designated in advance of the wall or stage. Foreseeable risks must be identified and precautions taken to minimize risks.
- Equipment/furniture which presents a risk to the student must not be stored around the perimeter of the area in use for interschool athletics. A reasonable number of benches as well as mats secured to the wall are exceptions to this statement.
- A formal safety inspection and written status report of all interschool facilities and major equipment must be done by a reputable third party on a regular basis.
- There must be a designated safe area for spectators.
- A telephone or other suitable means of communication must be available for all activities/locations.
- Playing fields must be free from hazardous holes, glass and rocks. Severely uneven surfaces must be brought to the attention of the students, the principal and municipal staff (where appropriate) and modifications made, if necessary. There must be sufficient turf for proper traction and impact absorption, (e.g. accidental trip and fall).

Other facilities that are used, (e.g. pools, arenas, etc.) must conform to safety standards and be free from hazards. Concerns about potentially dangerous situations must be reported to appropriate authorities.

e) Special Rules/Instructions:

- The skills of an interschool sport must be taught in proper progression prior to participation.
- Prior to teaching skills of the sport the coach has a duty to:
  - outline the inherent risks involved in the activity;
  - demonstrate how to minimize the risks;
  - set procedures and rules for safe participation.
- Fitness development appropriate to the level of competition must be addressed.
- Students must be made aware of ways to protect themselves from high levels of UV rays.
- Students must receive instruction on safety procedures related to severe weather conditions, (i.e. lightning).
- Adequate liquid replacement must be accessible for student athletes during practice and competition.

f) Supervision :

- Definition of Supervision: Supervision is the overseeing of an activity for regulation or direction. All facilities, equipment and activities have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become. ALCDSB supervision guidelines apply.
- Definition of a Coach: A coach can be any individual approved by the principal or designate (see Appendix 5). Any coach who is not a teacher or administrator employed by the board or an individual with teaching certification approved by the principal (e.g. retired teacher, teacher not under contract) must:
  - complete the application form for outside coaches (see Form D);
  - be interviewed and approved by the principal or designate (see Form D);
  - become familiar with relevant school and board policies and procedures provided by the principal or designate.
- Role of Coach Liaison Within a School District: The principal or designate is to appoint a coach liaison who is a teacher or administrator for every coach who is not a teacher or administrator employed by the board or an individual with teaching certification approved by the principal (e.g. retired teacher, teacher not under contract). The coach liaison will be responsible for carrying out all the duties required

of a teacher pursuant to the Education Act and these guidelines (see Appendix 5). The level of support will be commensurate with the expertise and qualifications of the coach and will be determined by the principal or designate. “In-the-area” supervision of a non-teacher coach means that the coach liaison must be accessible and at least one of the following criteria must be in place:

- coach liaison is visible;
  - coach liaison circulating on the same site;
  - location of coach liaison is known.
- When the practice or competition takes place within the school district, the designated coach liaison may be from any school involved in the practice or competition.
  - Role of Coach Liaison Outside of School District: When a school team is traveling outside their school district, a coach liaison from the same school district must accompany the team, must be accessible, and at least one of the following criteria must be in place:
    - coach liaison is visible;
    - coach liaison circulating on the same site;
    - location of coach liaison is known.
  - For higher risk sport, coaches must meet specific sport coaching qualifications (see individual sport pages).
  - Supervision by the Coach: Any use of a facility must be supervised; this guideline has designated three categories of supervision by the coach: “Constant Visual”, “On-Site” and “In-the-Area”. The categories are based on the principles of general and specific supervision which take into consideration the risk level of the activity, the participants’ skill level and the participants’ maturity.
  - Categories of Supervision: In the category of supervision, “Constant Visual” supervision means that the coach is physically present, watching the activity in question. Only one activity requiring “Constant Visual” supervision can take place while other activities are going on. Only one activity requiring “Constant Visual” supervision can take place while other activities are going on. “On-Site” supervision entails coach presence but not necessarily constantly viewing one specific activity. For “In-the-Area” supervision, the coach must be readily accessible and at least one of the following criteria must be in place:
    - coach circulating;
    - location of coach is known;
    - coach is visible.

Example: During a track and field session, some students are involved in high jump, some in relay, while others are involved in distance running.

- “Constant visual” supervision - High Jump (initial instruction) – Coach is at the event and is observing activity.

- “On-site” supervision - Relay - Students are practicing on the track/field and can be seen by the coach.
- “In-the-area” supervision - Distance Running - Students are running a prescribed route through the school neighbourhood.
- Supervision – Points to Consider:
  - Student must be aware that the use of equipment and the gymnasium are prohibited without the appropriate type of supervision. Deterrents must be in place, for example:
    - ◆ locked doors;
    - ◆ signs on doors indicating that students are not to use the gym unless supervised;
    - ◆ staff scheduled and present in an adjoining physical education office, in order to see students who might enter the gym unauthorized.
  - Level of supervision must be commensurate with the inherent risk of the sport and the maturity of the athletes. Establish routines, rules of acceptable behaviour and appropriate duties of students at the beginning of the sport season and reinforce throughout the season. Coaches must sanction students for unsafe play or unacceptable behaviour, and must exercise that responsibility at all times. Refer to Appendices 3 and 7.
  - Rules of the sport must be taught and strictly enforced.
  - While occasional teachers should not be required to coach a practice or game, she/she may do so if:
    - ◆ he/she has a competence level with sport activity;
    - ◆ absent coach or administrator or designate has provided the Safety Guidelines page(s) for interschool sport activity;
    - ◆ absent coach has specify restrictions/modifications for students with health or behavioural problems.
    - ◆ the occasional teacher is willing to assume responsibility.
  - When an interschool sport includes large numbers of participants (e.g. a school cross-country team) the ratio of coaches to participants must satisfy safety concerns as outlined in ALCDSB Field Trip Policy.
  - A school is responsible for supervising its own spectators.
  - Sport conveners must address the issue of event security.
  - When an interschool sport includes several higher risk activities (e.g. track and field) the ratio of coaches to participants must satisfy safety concerns.

g) Coaching Qualifications:

- Coach in charge must:

- Review local guidelines for the sport and attend appropriate clinics and coaches' meetings.
- Be encouraged to complete Level 1 Theory and Technical of the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) or equivalent in the sport which he/she is coaching.
- Be encouraged to attend a basic first aid course.
- Adhere to coaching qualifications for higher risk sports (see individual sport pages).

h) Coach's Role and Responsibilities:

- The coach must work with student athletes in a professional manner that emphasizes respect, fair play and skill improvement.
- It is the coach's responsibility to be knowledgeable of the rules and the skills necessary for the students to play the game safely.
- The coach is to be aware of and enforce:
  - the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board Field Trip Policy and Administrative Procedures for Interschool Sports;
  - competition, playing regulations and constitution by-laws.
- Ensure that the Interschool Athletic Participation Form (see Form A) has been completed by parents/guardian and has been returned prior to participation in the first practice. Coaches must have access to the forms at ALL practices and games.
- Coaches should provide a suitable level of competition according to skill, size, age and conditioning of the athlete. Coaches must examine the intensity and frequency of drills, practices and games in order not to put the student at risk (e.g. excessive repetition of a heading or hitting skill).
- When there has been an interruption to a competitive season of more than two weeks, coaches must provide appropriate practice time before competition may resume.
- Inform participants, in writing or verbally, of the times and locations of practices and games.
- Early in the season, clearly establish expectations and general conduct for practices and games. Involve players in formulating behavioural guidelines; fostering player discipline and self control to minimize risk and promote fair and safe play (refer to Appendix 12, OFSSA Code of Conduct for Players).

- Game:
    - Officials must be treated with respect. Officials' decisions are final (e.g. question officials' decision through proper procedures).
    - It is the responsibility of the coaches to control their teams and instruct their players to participate in a safe manner according to the rules of the game.
    - Visiting coaches are responsible for their teams' behaviour and the behaviour of volunteer drivers who represent their school.
    - Coaches must be aware of the School's Coaching Handbook and Local Association Coaches' Code of Behaviour.
  - Supervision:
    - Participants must be appropriately supervised during all phases of the activity: practices, warm-up, competition and breaks.
    - For all sports, where the coach is not of the same sex **as** the athlete(s) and where the athlete(s) are required or might be required to stay overnight, a supervising adult, as approved by the principal of the school, of the same sex as the athlete(s), must be present and available at the accommodation site for the duration of their stay in the accommodation.
  - For higher risk sports, the coach must document athlete attendance and all practice plans, with reference to progressive development of skills, with attention paid to identified inherent risks of the sport, (see Appendix 4 "Coaches' Planner").
  - Before each practice or game, the coach must visually inspect facilities and playing surfaces to ensure that they meet safety guidelines; the coach must not allow participation if he/she is not satisfied that the facilities or playing surface are safe.
- i) Player's Role and Responsibilities:
- All participants are expected to abide by the established behavioural guidelines.
  - All participants must be encouraged to report all injuries to the coach.

### 3.0 Intramural Guidelines:

The following delineates certain standards that must be used by teachers/intramural supervisors in addressing the safety component of intramural activities. Intramurals are defined as school-sponsored physical/recreation activities which:

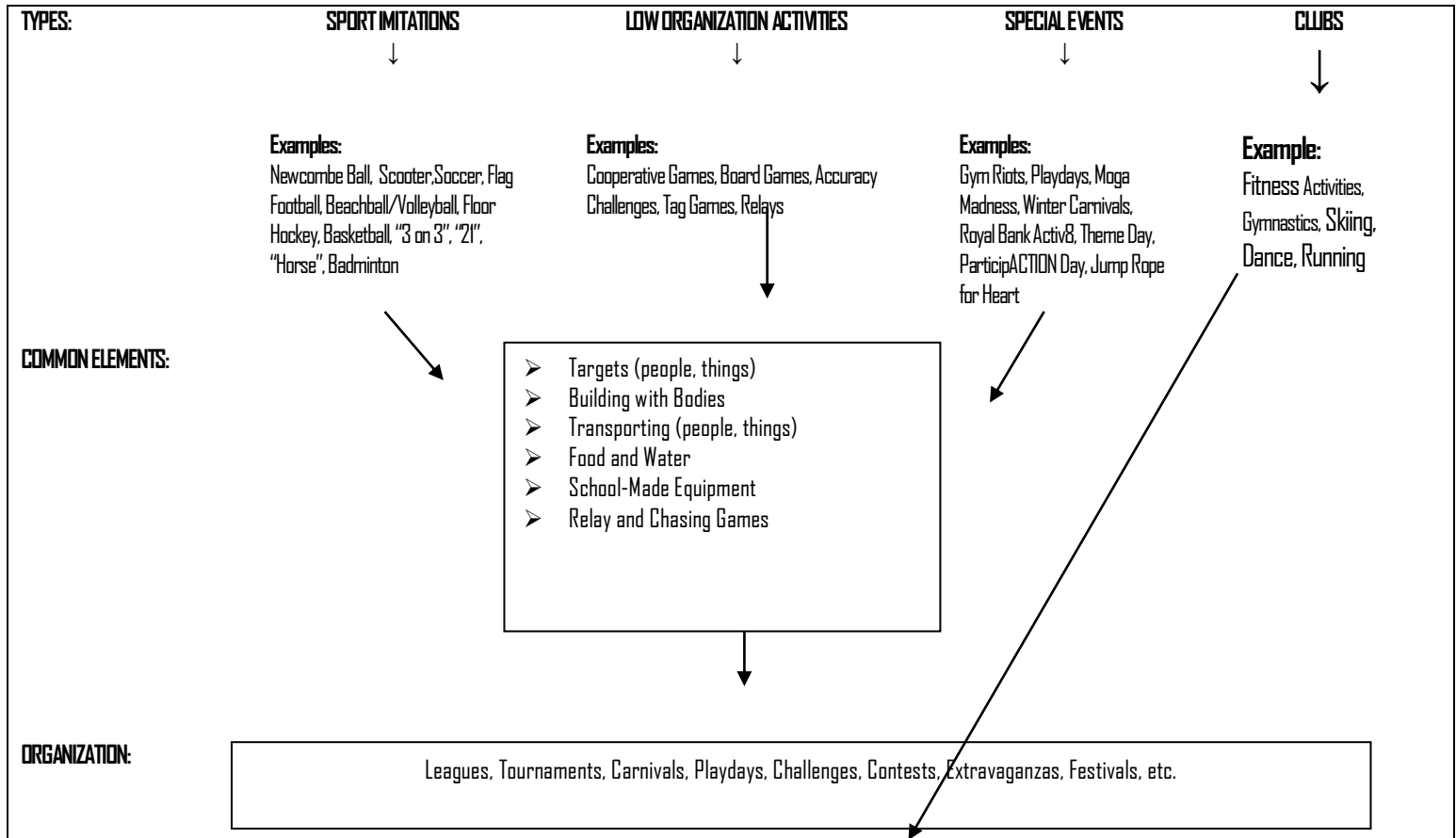
- are outside the student's instructional time;
- are not a selected school team/group;
- are not a competition against another outside team/group.



Intramurals encourage school-wide involvement with emphasis on participation as opposed to competition.

Intramurals can be categorized into four types: Sport Imitations, Low Organization Activities, Special Events and Clubs. When an intramural activity is played according to official rules and equipment (e.g. a common sport imitation or low organization game), refer to Curricular Safety Guidelines.

If a supervisor wishes to include activities which are not approved (e.g. ice hockey), approval from the appropriate school board official must be received. As part of this process, the supervisor must demonstrate that appropriate precautions will be taken in the interest of student safety.



### 3.1 GENERIC ISSUES:

It should be recognized that there are common guidelines of safety which apply to all of the above types of activities. Some such commonalities are as follows:

- a) Supervisors need to be aware of the medical background and physical limitations of students. Students must be informed that it is their responsibility to advise the supervisor of any medical condition that could affect participation, e.g. hemophilia, cystic fibrosis, heart disorder, severe allergies (e.g. verbally or through letter - see Form A).
- b) A fully-stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible. For a sample listing of first aid items, see Appendix 1. Apply your school's emergency action plan to deal

with accidents in intramurals. For details on an emergency action plan, see Appendix 2.

- c) Prior to offering an intramural sport imitation activity which the student has not experienced, skills must be taught. The risks of the activity must be outlined (warnings of possible dangers), demonstration on how to minimize the risks must occur, and set procedures and rules for safe play must be implemented, e.g. whistle signal to stop all activity. Parents need to be made aware of the types of intramurals/club activities which the school offers and the risks inherent in higher risk activities. Parental acknowledgment/permission must be received from each participant (see Form B).
- d) Students must be informed of the locations of the fire exits and alternate routes from the playing area.
- e) If students are transported away from the school for the intramural/club activities, it is important that parents are made aware of the mode of transportation and the student expectations required. Refer to individual school board's field trip procedures related to the need for obtaining parent/guardian permission.  
  
Consideration must be given to informing parents when students are involved in activities which require students to walk off the immediate school property, e.g. to adjacent parks, nearby ice surfaces. Refer to the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board Field Trip Policy and Administrative Procedures related to the need for obtaining parent/guardian permission.
- f) Where an incident occurs that increases or could increase the risk of injury, corrective actions must take place to help prevent its recurrence (e.g. volleyball poles in equipment room are not secured to floor/walls and crash to floor. No one is injured - corrective action is to secure poles).
- g) At the beginning of the activity, supervisors must tell students if changing into gym wear is necessary, and identify location and conduct expected.
- h) Intramural supervisors must limit the number of active participants in any activity area at one time, based on the size of the area, risk level of the activity, and maturity level of the participants.
- i) Spectators at intramural activities must not present a safety concern.
- j) Officials must be knowledgeable and trained to carry out their duties.

### 3.2 SPECIFIC COMPONENTS:

- a) Guidelines:
  - Guidelines for each activity are outlined according to the following critical components: Equipment/ Special Rules/ Instruction/ Clothing/ Footwear/ Supervision Facilities.

b) Equipment:

- When using any equipment that is not described in the document, care must be taken to ensure that it is safe for use, e.g. no sharp edges, sharp corners, cracks, or splinters and that it is size, mass and strength appropriate.
- All balls must be properly inflated.
- Ropes used for tug-of-war events must be designed by the manufacturer/distributor as being suitable for tug-of-war.
- There are many examples of equipment that can be made at school by board employees, adult volunteers and by students who are under direct supervision. Home-made equipment is defined as equipment that is made and/or modified at home and then brought to school. This type of home-made equipment is not to be used in intramural programs, e.g. personal cosom hockey sticks, floor hockey shafts, plastic bleach scoops.
- If students are permitted to bring their own equipment (e.g. badminton racquets, skis, in-line skates), students and parents must ensure that the equipment is in good working order and suitable for personal use.
- In “open gym” situations, intramural supervisors must have a process to sign out designated school equipment, e.g. basketballs.

c) Clothing and Footwear:

- Students must wear appropriate clothing for intramural activities. Running shoes must be a minimum uniform requirement. Where cultural dress presents a safety hazard, modifications to the activity/clothing must be made.
- Hanging jewelry must not be worn. Jewelry which cannot be removed and which presents a safety concern, e.g. medical alert identification, religious/cultural jewelry, must be taped or covered.
- Parents/guardians and students must be made aware of safety precautions with eyeglasses including the need for an eyeglass strap and/or shatterproof lenses for some activities.

d) Facilities:

- To provide a safe environment for intramural/club activities, the intramural supervisor must make a pre-activity check of the facilities and equipment to be used. The minimum requirement is a pre-use visual check. Hazards must be identified and removed as a factor in the activity. Potentially dangerous and immovable objects (e.g. goalposts, protruding stage) must be brought to the attention of students and administration. Equipment listed in the document applies only to safety.

- Students also should be encouraged to report equipment or facility problems to the supervisors (see Appendix 3).
- Equipment/furniture which is hazardous to the activity must not be stored around the perimeter of the area in use. A reasonable number of benches as well as mats secured to the wall are exceptions to this statement. Devices projecting from the wall (e.g. chin-up bars, pegs on a peg board), must be attached at a height that will minimize injury or be removed when not in use.
- For all indoor activities, walls and stages must not be used for turning points or finish lines. A line or pylons could be designated in advance of the wall. Foreseeable risks must be identified and precautions taken to minimize risks.
- Playing fields must be free from hazards, e.g. holes, glass and rocks. Severely uneven surfaces must be brought to the attention of the principal and students must be made aware of them. There must be sufficient turf for proper traction and impact absorption, e.g. non-contact rugby.

e) Special Rules/Instructions:

- The Intramural Safety Guidelines do not support contact. In this document, contact is defined as intentional contact with the purpose of gaining an advantage in the specific activity (e.g. body contact, stick on body, stick on stick).
- Activities must be modified according to the age and ability levels of students and the facility available. Games must be based on skills that have been taught.
- Before involving students in strenuous outdoor activity, supervisors must take into consideration the weather conditions, previous training and the length of time the students will be vigorously active.
- If students are using body paint, allergy and floor traction concerns must be addressed.
- Modify activities to address safety issues of all participants when students who use aids (e.g. wheelchairs) are involved. Activities which do not promote a healthy active lifestyle (e.g. starvathons) are not appropriate.

f) Supervision:

- Supervision is the overseeing of an activity for regulation or direction. All facilities, equipment and activities have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become. A supervisor, as referred to below, is defined as a teacher, principal or vice-principal employed by the school board. A volunteer (not necessarily a teacher) could assist in the supervision of intramurals. Examples of volunteers are: instructional assistants, educational assistants, retired teachers, parents, co-op students, teacher candidates and trained senior students. Refer to the Board's policy regarding volunteers.
- Students must be informed that facilities and equipment must not be used without

authorization. In addition to written or verbal communications, at least one of the following deterrents must be in place:

- locked doors;
  - signs on doors indicating that students are not to use the gym unless supervised;
  - staff scheduled and present in an adjoining physical education office, in order to see students entering the gym without authorization.
- Any use of a facility must be supervised. Three categories of supervision: "Constant visual", "On-site", and "In-the-area". The categories are based on the principles of general and specific supervision which take into consideration the risk level of the activity, the participants' skill level and the participants' maturity.
  - "Constant visual" supervision means that the teacher is physically present, watching the activity in question. Each activity requiring "Constant visual" supervision must have a supervisor (certified teacher). "Intramural on-site" supervision requires volunteer monitor presence when the supervisor is not at the activity(ies). "In-the-area" supervision means that a volunteer monitor is not necessary and the supervisor is in a location close to the activity taking place. For "Intramural-on-site" supervision, the teacher/intramural supervisor must be readily accessible and at least one of the following criteria must be in place:
    - teacher/intramural supervisor circulating;
    - exact location of teacher/intramural supervisor is known and location is nearby;
    - teacher/intramural supervisor is visible.

Example: During a school special events day, some students are involved in tug-of-war, some in relay games and volleyball while others are involved in a team scavenger hunt around the school.

- "Constant visual" supervision – Tug-of-War - Intramural supervisor is at the event and is observing the activity .
  - "On-site" supervision - Relay Games - Students are participating on the playground and are being monitored by a volunteer.
  - "On-site" supervision – Sport Imitation Activity - Students are participating in volleyball in the gym and are monitored by another volunteer.
  - "In-the-area" supervision – Scavenger Hunt - Students are running around the school grounds and at times may be out of sight.
- The level of supervision must be commensurate with the inherent risk of the activity.

*Note: For sport-specific guidelines refer to the Ontario Safety Guidelines for Physical Education.*

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: First Aid Kit Contents
- Appendix 2: Emergency Action Plan
- Appendix 3: Student Responsibilities
- Appendix 4: Coaches' Planner
- Appendix 5: Criteria for Non-Teacher Coaches
- Appendix 6: Universal Precautions Re Blood and Bodily Fluids
- Appendix 7: Rules of Behaviour for Participants to OFSAA Championships
- Appendix 8: Coaching Expectations

## **Forms**

- Form A: Athletic Participation Form
- Form B: Athletic Consent Form
- Form C: Request to Resume Athletic Participation
- Form D: Volunteer Coaching Application

Approved: January 28, 2008