

Rowing

SECONDARY - INTERSCHOOL 2025

- This activity includes additional safety standards specific to Qualifications and First Aid (previously designated High Risk).
- Consult [Risk Management](#).
- The safety standards for this activity must be presented to the activity provider prior to the activity taking place. The activity provider must meet the minimum requirements listed in the safety standards. For more information on planning trips using outside providers, consult [Outside Activity Providers](#).

Equipment

- Determine that all equipment is safe (for example, no sharp corners, cracks, or splinters) and all assistive devices (e.g., a walker) are in good working condition and properly adjusted for the height and mobility needs of the student prior to participation.
- Protective equipment must not be altered (for example, cutting a portion off the back of mouth guards, adding padding to a protective helmet).
- Shell inspected before each outing (for example, check for holes, cracks, loose hardware).
- Shell must have bow-ball in good repair.
- Bow and stern buoyancy compartments must be securely closed with water-tight hatches.
- In practice sessions, each shell must be equipped with a signaling device and a watertight flashlight.

- In all shells the foot stretchers, shoes or other devices holding the feet will remain in the shell, each shoe or device shall be independently restrained to limit heel lift to a maximum of 7 cm for each shoe or type of foot gear fitted to the shell. In addition, where laces, velcro or similar materials must be opened before the rower can remove their feet from the shoes or other device, all such materials must be able to be released immediately by the rower with a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap. Where shoes or other devices holding the feet will not remain in the shell, each shoe or device must be able to be released by the rower without using their hands or with a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap or release device.
- Must have navigation lights attached if used after sunset or before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility, as specified in the Transport Canada Safe Boating Guide.
- Oars must be checked for splinters and cracks.
- Riggers and oar-locks must be secure and operate freely.
- Steering lines must be secure and operating correctly.
- Regattas are required to be sanctioned by Rowing Canada Aviron and meet all sanction requirements, as governed by the provincial Sanctions Officer.
- One Coach Boat must be motorized and equipped as per [Transport Canada's Safe Boating Guide](#) requirements. Examples:
 - One CSA approved personal flotation device (P.F.D.)/lifejacket of appropriate size for each member of the Coach Boat
 - paddles
 - bailer

- watertight flashlight
- signaling device
- motor in good repair, with sufficient gas for entire session
- 23m (75') floating rope
- Coach Boat engine must be running before crew leaves dock.
- A reboarding device is required where the vertical height that a person must climb to reboard the boat from the water (freeboard) is over 0.5m (1'8").

Refer to the [First Aid](#) section for first aid equipment requirements.

Clothing/Footwear/Jewellery

- Appropriate clothing and footwear must be worn.
- A dry change of clothes must be available on shore.
- Coach Boat occupants are required to wear personal flotation devices (P.F.D.) while on the water at all times.
- The wearing of jewellery during practices and competitions must meet the rules of the governing body of the sport/activity, [OFSA](#), and local athletic association. Consult the [General Safety Standards for Clothing, Footwear, and Jewellery](#) when jewellery is not addressed by the governing body of the sport/activity, OFSAA or the local athletic association.
- Long hair must be secured. Devices (for example, hair pins, elastics and barrettes) used to tie back long hair must not present a safety concern.
- Students must not participate when the length of fingernails poses a safety risk to themselves or others.

Facilities

- Determine that all facilities are safe and accessible for the students participating. Students must be encouraged to report facility problems to the coach.
- When using an indoor rowing facility or a rowing club, the rules and Codes of Conduct of that facility or club must be followed.

Dockside/Boathouse

- Must have posted walking traffic pattern with hazards identified (for example, keep to right, dock slippery when wet).
- Coach must be aware of the site's Emergency Action Plan (EAP), including the site specific rescue plan, and share with all Monitors and participants.
- Keep spectators out of boat launch area and high boat-traffic areas.

On the Water

- Constantly evaluate the practice/competition area addressing issues as they arise (for example, pulling out deadheads or alerting crews to avoid areas if there is debris).
- Coach must inform students of debris.
- Be aware of water currents, especially those created by rapids and waterfalls.
- All practice and competition sites must not include rapids and waterfalls.

Environmental Considerations

- When environmental conditions may pose a risk to student safety (for example, thunderstorms [lightning] or student(s) with asthma, triggered by air quality), Coaches must take into consideration their school board/school's protocols and procedures related to:

- environmental conditions (consult [Weather](#)); and
 - insects (for example, mosquitoes and ticks [consult the school/school board's protocols and/or regional Public Health Department's website]).
- Students must receive instruction on safety procedures related to environmental conditions and be made aware of ways to protect themselves (for example, sun burn, heat stroke).
- At all times the school board's weather and insect procedures are the minimum standards. In situations where a higher standard of care is presented (for example, outside activity providers, facility/program coordinators), the higher standard of care must be followed.
- Before involving students in outdoor activity, Coaches must take into consideration:
 - water conditions (for example, temperature, currents, tides and wave conditions).
 - visibility of 500m (1640') is required
- Follow cold water rules specific to the rowing facility.
- Coaches/Monitors must be aware of weather forecasts, especially wind conditions, temperature of the day, potential for thunder/lightning and fog conditions.
- Rowing must be cancelled in adverse conditions (for example, first sign of white caps).
- If stormy weather approaches suddenly, seek appropriate shelter immediately.
- Daylight rowing only.

Special Rules/Instructions

- Be aware of students whose medical condition (for example, asthma, anaphylaxis, casts, previous concussion, orthopaedic device) may affect participation. Consult [Medical Conditions](#).

- Prior to participation students must receive concussion information through the appropriate Ministry of Education's Concussion Awareness Resource or the school board approved concussion resources. Students must also receive information on:
 - the Concussion Code of Conduct;
 - concussion prevention strategies specific to the activity and inherent risks of the activity (that is, outline possible risks and ways to minimize the risks);
 - procedures and rules for safe play; and
 - the importance of reporting symptoms related to a suspected concussion.
- Students must confirm their review of the concussion awareness resource and Concussion Code of Conduct prior to participation.
- Refer to school board policies and procedures (i.e., transportation, excursion/field trip) for communication with parents/guardians, the location of an off-site activity, means of transportation, supervision ratios, and parent/guardian permission.
- Previous training, fitness level, and the length of time and intensity of physical activity must be taken into consideration.
- Activities must be based on skills that are taught.
- Skills must be taught in proper progression.
- A warm-up and cool-down must be included.
- Fair play and rules of the sport must be taught and strictly enforced.
- Adequate liquid replacement (personal water bottles, water fountains) must be accessible for students before, during, and after physical activity to prevent dehydration.
- Students must be informed that they are not to share water bottles.
- Parents/guardians must be informed of the school board's policy related to initiation/hazing activities.
- The presence and location of spectators must not present a safety concern. A school is responsible for supervising its own spectators. The ratio of supervisor to spectators must address safety concerns.

- Students must be informed that the use of equipment and the gymnasium are prohibited without supervision. In addition to verbal communication, the doors must be locked or signs must be posted indicating that students are not allowed to use the gym unless appropriately supervised.
- Coach in motorized boat must be within 500m of crew during all on-water practice sessions.

Emergency Procedures

- Site specific rescue plan must be devised and shared with all Coaches/Monitors and participants.
- All Qualified Instructors must be knowledgeable of the established safety and capsize procedures. Qualified Instructors must outline these procedures to rowers and coxswains.
- Students must receive instruction on safety procedures, use of equipment and rowing techniques prior to initial practice.
- Students must be instructed to remain with rowing shell and oars for flotation and visibility purposes if an accident occurs.
- Should a shell swamp (take on water), rowers are not to attempt to swim to shore but stay with the shell using it as a flotation device and follow these steps:
 - Crew numbers off and removes feet from shoes. Remain in place if possible.
 - Make distress signal.
 - If necessary, crew enters water in pairs from middle of shell, buddy up across shell.
 - Coxswain buddies with stern pair in a stern-loaded coxed shell or bow-pair in a bow-loaded coxed shell.
 - Swing oars parallel to shell to increase flotation.

- Unless rescue is imminent, move crew to bow and stern and roll shell over (fin up) with the wind. Crew should lie across hull, as far out of the water as possible, in pairs, holding on to the other person.
- Coach Boat distributes P.F.D.'s on arrival and conducts headcount.
- Coach Boat shuttles rowers to nearest shore. DO NOT overload Coach Boat.
- Conduct headcount on returning.
- Recover shell.
- In case of an emergency, a pre-determined return route must be established.
- Procedures must be in place to ensure accountability for all shells and Coaches and students on the water at any given time, in case of an emergency.

Supervision

- All activities must be supervised.
- The type of supervision must be commensurate with the inherent risk of the activity. The level of risk is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, and environmental conditions.
- On-Site Supervision is required during the safety and initial skill instruction.
- On-Site Supervision is required when students are moving and handling equipment (e.g., lifting, portaging carries, launching and removing watercraft(s) to and from the water).
- On-Site Supervision is required for the duration of all other components of the activity (e.g., equipment setup and take down, warm-ups/cool downs, application of the skills and games).

- The Community Coach Liaison must be accessible to the Community Coach and students (at practices and competitions). The level of support will be commensurate with the expertise and qualifications of the Community Coach as determined by the Principal/Designate.
- As a minimum the Community Coach Liaison will provide In-the-Area supervision for all practices and competitions. Direct Supervision is required if a Community Coach is under the age of 18.
- When students are competing outside their school district (e.g., travel tournaments, regional/ provincial competitions):
 - a Community Coach Liaison from the same school board must be accessible to the Community Coach; and
 - consult school board and local athletic association rules and regulations with regard to Coach, Community Coach, and Community Coach Liaison duties and adhere to the higher standard of care.
- Where a Qualified Instructor is used, the Qualified Instructor must provide safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring for the safe application of skills and student behaviour for the duration of the activity.
- A Volunteer, under the direction of a Coach, can monitor students during practices and competitions. Refer to your school board's policy on volunteers assisting with students' physical activities.
- Responsibilities must be clearly outlined for additional Coaches and Volunteers who are monitoring the activity.

Refer to the [**Swim Test**](#) section for the swim test supervision ratios.

Supervision Ratios

- Beginner rowers: 1 Coach per 9 students
- Experienced rowers: 1 Coach per 18 students

Qualifications

Refer to the [Swim Test](#) section for the swim test aquatic instructor qualification requirements.

- Operator of the Coach Boat must have a Pleasure Craft Operator Card.

Coaching Qualifications

- Game/match official(s) must be certified and/or experienced in officiating the sport.
- The Head Coach must demonstrate knowledge of the sport, skills, and strategies to the Principal or Designate.
- All Coaches must meet with the head Coach of the rowing club (if applicable) prior to the start of the season and be in communication throughout the season.
- All Coaches must be familiar with and implement, where applicable, the criteria outlined in [Coaches Expectations](#).
- At least one Coach must possess one of the following coaching qualifications:
 - NCCP Competition Coach – RCA Coach Course
 - Accreditation as a NCCP Rowing Learning Facilitator
 - Completion of rowing NCCP level 1 and/or level 2 certification in the past
 - Attendance at a clinic or workshop within the last three years provided by an instructor who is knowledgeable of the activity (for example, appropriate skills and progressions), and where safety is addressed as outlined in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education
 - Past experience within the last 3 years as a coach in rowing, having knowledge of the activity (for example, appropriate skills and progressions) and current safety practices as outlined in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education.
 - At least one Coach must possess experience within the last three years as a coach in rowing, having knowledge of the activity (for example, appropriate skills and progressions) and current

safety practices as outlined in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education.

- For more information on sport-specific NCCP training please visit coach.ca.

Refer to the [Swim Test](#) section for the swim test lifeguard qualification requirements.

First Aid

- A fully stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible. (Consult [Sample First Aid Kit](#))
- A working communication device (for example, cell phone) must be accessible.
- A Coach/Monitor who takes responsibility for providing first aid to injured students through the entirety of a practice and/or competition and must follow the school board's concussion protocol and the school's First Aid Emergency Response (consult [First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response](#)).
- The designated individual who takes responsibility for providing first aid to injured students must:
 - as a minimum, have a current first aid certification from a recognized first aid provider (for example, St. John Ambulance, Red Cross) that includes CPR B or C and training in head, neck and spinal injury management;
 - be in the area and readily accessible during the entire practice/competition;
 - be aware of the school's first aid emergency action plan and follow their first aid emergency response (consult First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response) including specific direction for participants with accessibility needs, and use of assistive devices or medications;
 - follow their school board's concussion protocol for a suspected concussion;
 - and not be a participant in the activity.

Definitions

- **Coach** (i.e. Teacher Coach/Community Coach):
 - An individual who volunteers to coach a school team and is approved by the Principal/Designate.
- **Community Coach:**
 - An individual approved by the principal who volunteers to coach a school team. An individual acting in the role of a Community Coach must be assigned a Community Coach Liaison.
 - Examples of a Community Coach are:
 - teachers not under contract by the board;
 - retired teachers;
 - early childhood educators, teacher candidates, educational assistants;
 - co-op students, other secondary students;
 - parent/guardian;
 - individuals/coaches from the community.
- **Community Coach Liaison:**
 - A Teacher, Principal, or Vice Principal with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school board who is responsible for carrying out all the duties required of a Teacher pursuant to the Education Act and the safety standards. The level of support will be commensurate with the expertise and qualifications of the Community Coach and will be determined by the Principal or Designate.
- **Instructional Time:**
 - Time during which there is formal instruction and/or instructor led activities. Examples of instructional time are lessons, events, practice, and games.
- **Lifejacket:**
 - Canadian-approved lifejackets are designed to turn an unconscious or incapacitated person face-up in the water. Lifejackets are available with varying amounts of flotation and turning ability.

Canadian approved Lifejackets are stamped or labelled indicating that they are approved by Transport Canada, the Canadian Coast Guard or the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

- **Monitor:**

- A Volunteer and/or Qualified Instructor who assists the Teacher Coach with a group of students and has a responsibility to monitor student behaviors for the duration of the activity.
- A Community Coach who has a responsibility to coach and monitor student behaviors for the duration of the athletic season and/or a Qualified Instructor(s)/Volunteer(s) who assists the Community Coach during practices and competitions.

- **Monitoring:**

- The role of monitoring is to observe, identify, act, and report:
 - Observe: Observe with attention to detail the actions of the students.
 - Identify: Identify the student and the unsafe behaviour.
 - Act: Take appropriate actions to safeguard students and others (e.g., stop the activity).
 - Report: Provide the name of the student and the unsafe behaviour to the Coach for management and direction.

- **Personal Flotation Device (P.F.D.):**

- Canadian-approved P.F.D.'s are designed for use in recreational boating and are generally smaller, less bulky and more comfortable than lifejackets. They may have less flotation than lifejackets and may have no or little self-turning ability (the ability to turn an unconscious or incapacitated person face-up in the water). Canadian approved P.F.D.'s are stamped or labelled indicating that they are approved by Transport Canada, the Canadian Coast Guard or the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

- **Qualified Instructor:**

- An individual who provides safety and skill instruction, and monitoring for an activity, and possesses the required qualifications (e.g., experience, certifications). This role could be fulfilled

by a teacher, volunteer, or an employee of an outside provider. An instructor does not have the authority to supervise.

- **Supervision:**

- The vigilant overseeing of an activity for management or direction. Activities, facilities, and equipment have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become.
- The Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education includes three Types of supervision, Direct Supervision, On-Site Supervision, and In-the-Area Supervision. These types of supervision take into consideration the level of risk, which is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, the environmental conditions, the age, and developmental stage.
- The three types of supervision described are not hierarchical but represent the type of supervision that activities require and the type of supervision that is inherently possible.
- Some activities in OPASSE transition from one type of supervision to another type of supervision (e.g., Direct Supervision to On-Site Supervision OR On-Site Supervision to In-the-Area Supervision).

- **Teacher Coach:**

- A Teacher Coach is a teacher, principal, or vice principal with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school board.

- **Types of Supervision:**

- **Direct Supervision:**
 - Direct Supervision requires that the Coach is physically present at the activity, providing visual and verbal oversight for management and direction of both the activity and student safety.
 - Provisos:

- No other activity can occur when part of the activity or the entire activity is under Direct Supervision when there is only one Coach supervising.
- The Supervision section of the relevant activity safety standards page in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education describes when parts of an activity are under Direct Supervision.
- Where a Community Coach is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring, a Community Coach Liaison is accessible for management and direction as determined by the Principal/Designate.
- An activity may be under Direct Supervision:
 - During the entire duration of the activity;
 - During the set up and take down of equipment;
 - During the safety and initial skill instruction;
 - During the performance/practice of the activity skill; and
 - When the activities transition from Direct Supervision to On-Site Supervision.
- **In-the-Area Supervision:**
 - The Coach is located in proximity to a combination of locations where the student activities take place, is circulating, and is accessible for providing management and direction of the physical activity and student safety.
 - **Provisos:**
 - The Coach is circulating between the activities, occurring at separate locations, and is readily accessible, or the location of the coach is communicated to the student.
 - Where a Community Coach is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and is monitoring, a Community Coach Liaison is accessible for management and direction as determined by the Principal/Designate.

- Students may be out of sight for periods of time.
- An activity or a component of the activity is under In-the-Area Supervision:
 - Where the same activity is located in separate locations. (e.g., Track and Field, Cross Country Running, Skiing (Alpine));
 - Where two or more activities under In-the-Area Supervision occur in separate locations (e.g., Badminton, Table Tennis, Handball (Wall));
 - Where the skill application of the activity takes place at a different location from the Coach (e.g., Cross Country Running, Skiing (Alpine), Cycling);
 - Where activities occur in double or triple gymnasiums; and
 - Where more than one Qualified Instructor is providing activities at a combination of locations.
- **On-Site Supervision:**
 - The Coach is present at one location where the student activity takes place (e.g., gymnasium, sports field, tennis courts at an Outside Activity Provider's facility) and is accessible for providing management and direction of the physical activity and student safety.
 - **Provisos:**
 - Where more than one activity occurs in one location, the Coach is circulating between the activities and is accessible for management and direction.
 - Momentary presence in adjoining rooms (e.g., equipment room, outside storage shed, boathouse) is considered to be On-Site Supervision.
 - Where a Community Coach is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring, a Community Coach Liaison is accessible for management and direction as determined by the Principal/Designate.
 - An activity may be under On-Site Supervision:

- During the entire duration of the activity;
- During the safety and initial skill instruction;
- With activities using multiple stations while the Coach is circulating;
- When combining two or more activities at one location while the Coach is circulating; and
- When activities transition from On-Site Supervision to In-the-Area Supervision.

- **Volunteer:**

- A responsible adult (e.g., Educational Assistants, Retired Teachers, Co-op Students, Parents/Guardians, Teacher Candidates) approved by the Principal/Designate who is under the direction of a Coach and has been instructed on their monitoring responsibilities. Refer to your school board's policy on volunteers assisting with students' physical activities.

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