

Rowing

Including Viking Boats

ELEMENTARY - CURRICULAR 2025

- Consult [**Disability-Centred Safety**](#) if your groups of students include students with disabilities.
- Grade 6-8 Students Only
- 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.
- Students must wear a correctly fitting, properly secured/fastened and Canadian approved personal flotation device (PFD) or lifejacket, with whistle/signaling device attached, at all times near the water, where the depth of the water poses a risk, in and on the water.
- Teachers and all individuals who assist with the watercraft activity (for example, Qualified Instructors, Trip Guides) are required to wear a correctly fitting, properly secured/fastened and Canadian approved PFD or lifejacket, with whistle/signaling device attached, at all times near the water, where the depth of the water poses a risk, in and on the water.

Watercraft

- 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.
- 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.

Safety Craft

- A safety craft is a designated craft that is rescue-capable, taking into consideration necessary factors (for example, distance from shore, weather, water and wind conditions), and contains at least one Teacher, Qualified Instructor, or Trip Guide who meets the first aid certification.
- The safety craft must be motorized and equipped as per [**Transport Canada's Safe Boating Guide requirements**](#).
- The operator of the motorized safety craft must have a Pleasure Craft Operator Card, experience in navigating the craft and knowledge of the waterway in which the activity takes place (for example

hazards, rocks, shoals).

- The motorized safety craft must not pose a risk to the safety of the participants (for example, maintain a safe distance from the watercraft, operate at a speed that minimizes boat wake unless responding to an emergency).
- The motorized safety craft must be the first craft in the water with occupants aboard and the engine running before Students leave the beach, dock or mooring and while Students are on the water.
- 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").
- Safety craft must be within 500m (1640') of Students during all on-water sessions.

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.
- The Teacher/Monitor boat occupants are required to wear personal flotation devices (P.F.D.) while on the water at all times.
- Glasses, if worn, must have a safety strap.
- When long hair poses a safety risk it 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 teacher.

- 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).

On the Water

- Constantly evaluate the instructional area addressing issues as they arise (for example, pulling out deadheads or alerting crews to avoid areas if there is debris).
- The Teacher/Qualified Instructor must inform students of debris.
- Be aware of water currents, especially those created by rapids and waterfalls.
- All 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), Teachers 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, poisonous plants).
- 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.

- Teachers/Monitors must be aware of weather forecasts, especially wind conditions, temperature of the day, potential for thunder/lightning and fog conditions.
- Activity must be cancelled in adverse conditions and when there is poor visibility (for example, first sign of white caps).
- If inclement weather approaches suddenly, seek appropriate shelter immediately.
- Daylight rowing only.
- Students must be familiar with basic first aid, hypothermia, and injuries caused by extreme heat.
- Attention must be given to:
 - Water conditions (for example, temperature, currents, tides and wave conditions).
 - Visibility of 500m (1640') is required.
 - Length of time Students will be in sun and/or vigorously active.
 - Previous training and length of preparation.

Special Rules/Instructions

Student Medical Information

- Teachers must be aware of Students whose medical condition (for example, asthma, anaphylaxis, diabetes, epilepsy) may affect participation. Consult [**Medical Conditions**](#).
- Teachers must be aware of Students participating with orthopedic device(s) and/or assistive devices and establish safety rules and procedures to ensure Students can participate safely in activities.
- Teachers are required to inform all individuals who assist with the activity (for example Qualified Instructors, Aquatic Instructors, Lifeguards, Volunteers) of Students who have needs, orthopedic,

assistive devices, and/or medical conditions that may influence participation.

School Board Policies and Procedures

- Prior to participation, the Teacher must reference and apply their school board's policy on equity and inclusion as it affects student participation and makes appropriate accommodations/modifications to provide a safe learning environment. Consult the Intent subsection within the [About section](#).
- Students must not participate in the activity until they receive information on concussion prevention specific to the activity, inherent risks of the activity (for example, outline possible risks and ways to minimize the risks), and procedures and rules for safe play. Students must receive instruction on the importance of reporting symptoms related to a suspected concussion.
- Refer to school board policies and procedures (i.e., transportation, excursion/field trip) for parent/guardian communication and permission (for example, the location of an off-site activity, description of the activity and physical environment, means of transportation, inherent risks of the activity, supervision).
- Parents/guardians must be informed that all students must wear a correctly fitting, properly secured/fastened and Canadian approved personal flotation device (P.F.D.) or lifejacket, with whistle/signaling device attached, at all times near the water (when the depth of the water poses a risk), in and on the water.

Teacher Awareness/Preparation

- Activities must be modified according to the age, ability level, language, and experience of students, number of participants, and the facility available.
- 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.
- Teachers and all individuals who assist the Teacher with the activity must be aware of the possibility of pressuring Students. Students must be informed not to coerce a reluctant student into participating in

any component of the activity with which they display or vocalize reluctance.

- When a student displays or vocalizes reluctance about participation, at any time, before or during any component of the activity, they must be provided with alternative ways to participate in the activity (for example, permit Students to select a role within the activity, remain at or return to a different component of the activity, break down new experiences/ components into smaller steps, be introduced to a new component with which they are comfortable).
- Adequate liquid replacement (personal water bottles, water fountains) must be accessible for students before, during, and after physical activity to prevent dehydration.
- Skill level must be appropriate for the water conditions.
- Prior to participation all Teachers and all individuals who assist with the watercraft activity (e.g. Qualified Instructors/Trip Guides) must be aware of all Students' swimming ability, comfort and experience in water, and the water environment in which the activity takes place (for example, lakes, ponds, rivers) (Refer to [**Sample Swim Ability and Swim Comfort Assessment Questionnaire Form**](#)).
- Teachers and all individuals who assist with the watercraft activity (e.g. Qualified Instructors/Trip Guides) must be aware of Students who have none or limited swim ability/experience in the environment in which the activity takes place (Refer to [**Sample Swim Ability and Swim Comfort Assessment Questionnaire Form**](#)) and/or display or express hesitancy in the watercraft. The Teacher/Qualified Instructor must include additional program modifications (for example, consider the placement of Students based on their experience and comfort level, placing student with or near the Teacher/Qualified Instructor/Steersperson, and/or outfitting the student in a PFD or lifejacket with increased buoyancy).

Swim Ability and Swim Comfort Assessment Questionnaire

- Prior to the activity, the Swim Ability and Swim Comfort Assessment Questionnaire Form must be completed (Refer to [**Sample Swim Ability and Swim Comfort Assessment Questionnaire Form**](#)).
- The Swim Ability and Swim Comfort Assessment Questionnaire Form must be completed within the school year in which the activity is taking place.

- Results of the Swim Ability and Swim Comfort Assessment Questionnaire Form must be documented and communicated as per school board policy (for example, to the student, Teacher, Principal, Parents/Guardians, Trip Guide(s), Volunteers, Lifeguards, and Outside Provider [as applicable]).
- The Swim Ability and Swim Comfort Assessment Questionnaire Form must be completed and submitted, or the student must not participate in the activity.

Safety Rules and Emergency Procedures

- If standards vary between the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education and an activity provider, implement the higher standards.
- All Teachers/Qualified Instructors must be knowledgeable of the established safety rules and emergency procedures (for example, capsized/swamp procedures).
- Prior to participation, Students must be familiar with safety rules and emergency procedures specific to the watercraft activity in which they will participate (for example, PFD/lifejacket requirements, buddy responsibilities, capsized/swamp procedures, staying with the boat to use it as a life raft).
- After initial instruction, Students must demonstrate the ability to select a correctly fitting PFD/lifejacket and to properly secure/fasten it.
- Students must be informed of the location of available safety equipment and how to use it.
- Before the start of each session, Teacher/Qualified Instructor must inform appropriate personnel (for example, facility's staff member) of the beginning and ending time on water.
- Teachers must be aware of the site's Emergency Action Plan (EAP), including the Site Specific Rescue Plan, and share with all Monitors and Participants.
- 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 members number off and remove 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.
- The occupants of the safety craft conducts headcount upon arrival.
- In case of emergency, procedures must be in place to ensure accountability for all boats, Teachers, monitors and Students on the water.
- In case of an emergency, a predetermined return route must be established.
- A vehicle for emergency purposes must be available.
- An individual must be designated (for example, Teacher or Parent) to transport an injured student to the hospital. This must not be the Teacher/Trip Guide responsible for the excursion.

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).

- A Volunteer, under the direction of a Teacher, can monitor students during physical education activities. Refer to your school board's policy on Volunteers assisting with students' physical activities.
- Responsibilities must be clearly outlined for additional Teachers and Volunteers who are monitoring the activity.
- Where a Qualified Instructor is used and the Teacher is not directly with the Qualified Instructor, 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.
- Qualified Instructor in Teacher/Monitor boat must be within 500m (1640') of students during all on-water sessions.

Supervision/Monitoring Ratios for Instructional Time

- One Teacher/Monitor boat must be assigned for every 9 rowers.
- Rowing: 1 Qualified Instructor per 9 students.
- Viking Boats: 1 Qualified Instructor per 15 students.

Refer to the definition of Instructional Time.

Qualifications

- The operator of the Teacher/Monitor boat must have Pleasure Craft Operator Card.

Rowing Instructor Qualifications

- Qualified Instructor expertise derived from one of the following:
 - NCCP Rowing Technical Level I
 - attendance at Rowing Canada Aviron Learn to Row Instructor's workshop or equivalent within last 3 years

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.
- At least Teacher, Trip Guide, or Monitor must have a minimum of a current (not more than three years prior to the day on which the holder is on duty) first aid certificate (standard or higher) issued by one of the following agencies: St. John Ambulance; Canadian Red Cross; Lifesaving Society; Canadian Ski Patrol; or an organization whose certificate is deemed equivalent by the medical officer of health in the local health unit.
- Follow the school's first aid emergency response ((consult [First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response](#)) and the school board's concussion protocol (consult [Concussions](#))).
- An emergency action plan and response to deal with evacuations and lockdowns, including specific direction for participants with accessibility needs, must be followed and communicated to all students.☒

Definitions

- **In-charge Person:**
 - Some activities refer to an “In-Charge” person. While the teacher is in-charge and responsible for the overall safety and well-being of students under their care, sometimes there are other personnel who must be identified as “In-Charge” related to specific situations (for example, a pool lifeguard). In activities where an “In-Charge” person is designated, that person, in consultation with the teacher, must make final decisions regarding safety of the students
- **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:**

- An individual who assists the Teacher with a group of students, (e.g., Volunteer, Qualified Instructor) and has a responsibility to monitor student behaviors for the duration of the activity.

- **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 teacher for management and direction.

- **Outside Activity Provider:**

- A commercial company, volunteer organization, or individual, not associated with the school board, who possess the required qualifications to provide safety and initial skill instruction, and monitoring for the duration of an activity.

- **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:**

- A person with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school/school board (i.e., teacher, vice-principal, principal). This person is legally responsible for the students and has the authority and responsibility to supervise.

- **Types of Supervision:**

- **Direct Supervision:**

- Direct Supervision requires that the Teacher 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 Teacher 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 Qualified Instructor(s) is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring for one activity and requires the Teacher to be present at that activity for management and direction.
- 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 Teacher 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 Teacher is circulating between the activities occurring at separate locations, and is readily accessible, or the location of the Teacher is communicated to the student.
- Where a Qualified Instructor(s) is providing the safety and skill and instruction and is monitoring at a combination of locations, the Teacher is located in proximity to where the student activities take place, is circulating between the activity locations, and is accessible for management and direction.
- 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., Fitness activities);
 - 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 separate location from the teacher (e.g., Cross Country Running, Skiing (Alpine), Cycling, hiking on trails);
 - When the 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 Teacher is present at one location where the student activity takes place (e.g., gymnasium, sports field, climbing wall at an Outside Activity Provider's facility, campsite) 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 Teacher is circulating between the activities and is accessible for management and direction.
- Momentary presence in adjoining rooms (e.g., equipment room, outdoor storage shed, boathouse, staff tent) is considered to be On-Site Supervision.
- Where a Qualified Instructor(s) is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring for an activity or a combination of activities at one location and the Teacher is present and is circulating and accessible for management and direction.
- 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 Teacher is circulating;
 - When combining two or more activities at one location while the Teacher 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 Teacher and has been instructed on their monitoring responsibilities. Refer to your school board's policy on volunteers assisting with student's physical activities.

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