



Adventure Policies  
11/2016

It is DDES's goal to enrich the learning experience of our students by exposing them to experiences in the outdoors, which will make their academic learning more complete and satisfying. The Adventure program at DDES is an important component of our character education curriculum. Through adventure, students gain first-hand experience with character traits such as courage, tenacity and compassion. The end goal of this program is not to teach students how to camp, hike, rock climb, backpack, raft, snowshoe, etc., - but rather give them the chance to experience a moment where they act as crew with courage, compassion, integrity, tenacity, self-discipline, respect and craftsmanship. After adventure experiences, students are asked to reflect upon their experience and think about how the character they showed in adventure can transfer into their school and home lives.

The Adventure Specialist, Crew Leaders and other support staff accompanying students on adventure trips are responsible for DDES students. The greater the degree of risk in any activity, the greater the moral obligation is to anticipate and avoid hazards. When in doubt about which decision to make, the leaders in the program will always select the conservative course of action.

DDES students and families are entitled to know the nature and scope of the risks involved in an activity before commencing. Leaders should not assume that danger is obvious to students participating. Specific dangers should be addressed with students until the leaders feel confident that each student understands the risks involved and voluntarily assumes those risks before participating in the activity. The leader's judgment is critical in this area, as they may be faced with a dilemma in the case of hesitant students. Efforts to persuade students to participate must not be so vigorous that they feel pressured against their will. Our operating policies and safety procedures are designed to prevent accidents and crises. To help achieve this objective, it is the leader's role to understand and follow policies and procedures.

**Policy** - mandatory directive put in place to ensure effective institutional risk management. Adherence to policies is required.

**Best Practice** - plan of action informed by, and consistent with, approved policies and preferred practices. These are often areas that have too many variables to create a policy but should always be the primary practice.

**Field** – A designation for areas as more than one hour away from definitive care.

## **Acknowledgements**

A significant amount of material from this plan was borrowed from safety plans from Outward Bound USA, The Rocky Mountain School for Expeditionary Learning (RMSEL) and Grass Valley Charter School.

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## **Ratios**

### **Policy**

- Camping and day hikes: K-1<sup>st</sup> 6:1, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> 7:1, 5<sup>th</sup> 10:1
- Technical Activities (i.e. climbing and rafting): K-1<sup>st</sup> 5:1, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> 6:1, 5<sup>th</sup> 7:1

## **Equipment**

### **Policy**

- Each group will carry the following items in the field and have them accessible at all times
  - o Complete First Aid Kit.
  - o Copy of Policies and emergency contact sheet.
  - o Student prescription medications.
  - o Extra clothing, food, water, headlamp and a communication device.

## **Environmental Hazards**

### **Bears**

#### **Policy**

- In bear terrain students will be instructed to put all food containers in a safe, locked location
- Food will be stored in bear containers, buses or in a bear hang.

### **Lightning**

#### **Policy**

- When lightning threatens, staff will move students to the safety of a substantial building or a roofed vehicle if possible. Backcountry procedures will be used only when no building or vehicle is available.

### **Best Practice**

- At no closer than 5 miles (25 seconds between flash/boom) groups should seek the safest position such as inside a building or vehicle; if a building or vehicle is not available, follow these guidelines for safer terrain:
  - o Avoid high pointed terrain, including peaks, ridges, and relatively higher ground. Get below tree line and down low on mountains. In wide-open spaces or gently rolling hills the safest place is a ravine or relative depression.
  - o Canoes, rafts, and other small craft should get off the water, if possible.
  - o Avoid lone trees or tall or metal objects.
  - o Avoid long conductors such as metal fences, power lines, phone lines, railway tracks, handrails, wet extended ropes, metal stays, anchor rode, wet lichen-covered rock, cracks and crevices, overhangs, caves, and tree roots.
  - o When amongst trees of equal height, being equidistant between two is the most favorable position.
- At no closer than 2 miles (10 seconds) groups should be in lightning drill position and stay in this position until the storm passes and is more than 2 miles away.
- Lightning Drill Position (on land) should be:
  - o Prepare for the potential of hypothermia by utilizing necessary raingear, insulating clothing, water and food/snacks, along with any additional gear for lightning drill position (pad and pack/dry bag).

- If possible, spread group out so that there is 50 feet between each person in order to avoid multiple injuries from a strike. Squat on something non-conductive like a foam pad, backpack (as long as it does not have metal stays), or a PFD.
- Sequence for drill:
  - Squat or crouch as low as possible with your feet together and your arms wrapped around your legs. If the storm lasts so long that squatting is no longer practicable, the next safest position is sitting with arms folded across legs, keeping feet as close to the butt as possible.

## **Temperature**

### **Policy**

- Trips with expected temperatures greater than 100° or less than 10° should be rescheduled or moved to alternate locations.
- When temperatures are approximately greater than 100° or less than 10° travel outdoors will only occur to move to shelter.

## **Sun**

### **Policy**

- Students will be instructed to put on sunscreen and regularly reapply when exposed to the sun.
- Parents will receive gear lists that include sunscreen, hats and full-length clothing.
- Sunscreen application times will be logged on DDES Adventure trips.

## **Tornados**

### **Policy**

- Trips with expected tornado should be rescheduled or moved to alternate locations.
- During tornado warnings students should be moved to a safe place.
  - Seek a basement or storm cellar. If an underground shelter is unavailable seek a small interior room away from doors and windows.

## Adventure Activities

### Camping and Backcountry Ethics

#### **Policy**

- Adults must camp in the vicinity of students and maintain adequate supervision.
- DDES will design sleeping arrangements that best supports each student's emotional and physical safety. Students will be separated into tents of their stated gender identity.
- Students will be shown the designated boundary for each campsite.
- An adult will supervise stoves until students show proper competency.
- All non-potable water will be treated to national standard. See resources for information.
- Staff and Students will follow the principles of Leave No Trace.
- DDES will operate within all permit regulations and restrictions.

### Hiking and Backpacking

#### **Policy**

- When hiking in a group a designated adult should be in the front and the back of the group.
- A group should travel within sight or sound of one another.
- Students will not be required to carry more than 40% of their body weight. If a student has a condition that limits their ability to carry weight, they will be given an opportunity to carry less weight.
- In off trail travel students will carry and be trained to use an emergency whistle.

#### **Best Practice**

- Routes will be reconnoitered by staff to assess the appropriateness of the trail.

### Technical Rock Activities

#### **Policy**

- All technical rock sites will be reconnoitered, checked for rock fall and cleaned by staff prior to use.
- Helmets and harnesses will be worn for all technical rock activities.
- Knots used to tie into a harness will have 6" or longer tail, or twice the length of the knot.
- A trained adult will check harness and climbing rope knots each time a student enters a technical system.
- A designated safe area will be used at all technical rock site.
- A trained staff will check equipment before each day of use.

#### **Anchors**

##### Definitions

**Anchor Leg** - the total of the protection and other separate components, which are used to create one independent portion of the anchor system to the rope (i.e. carabiners, webbing, cordelette, etc.)

**Anchor Point** - artificial or natural piece of protection from which you construct an anchor leg.

**Anchor System** - comprised of two or more anchor legs, both of which are independent all the way to the point of attachment to the rope.

**Master Point** - the point at which each anchor leg meets for attachment to the rope.

## Policy

- Climbing ropes will be attached to master points using two carabiners, at least one of which is a locking carabiner.
- Master points will be redundant so that failure of any one-anchor leg will not cause failure of the entire system.
- Anchor systems will have an angle of 90° or less between the anchor legs.
- The integrity of natural and artificial anchors will be assessed each time climbs are set up.
- The following equipment or anchors can be considered inherently redundant, fulfilling the requirement for redundancy by themselves: The climbing rope, when used for climbing or in an anchor in a top belay situation. Very large and immovable boulders or large, well-rooted, live trees. A locking carabiner when used to belay with a Munter hitch or belay device off of the master point. Affixing a rappel rope to the Master Point when a belay system that is independent of the rappel rope is being employed.
- Anchors will be: **Equalized**: the load on each separate anchor in the system is equally distributed. Have **minimum extension**: there is little or no slack in the system; if one anchor point fails the anchor system will not be shock loaded. **Solid**: individual pieces and rock quality are highly unlikely to fail.

## Climbing

### Policy

- Only adults and students who have demonstrated competency and been checked off by the Adventure Coordinator will be able to belay.
- All student belayers will utilize a backup belayer.
- Students will tie into ropes directly to their harnesses using a figure eight follow thorough or with two locking carabineers.

## Rappelling

### Policy

- A releasable system will be used for all students.
- All students will use a friction device and a backup belay.
- Students will tie into ropes directly to their harnesses using a figure eight follow thorough or with one locking carabineer attached to the belay rope.
- Students will be instructed to tuck in loose clothing, hair or any other loose items that might get stuck in belay devices.

## Rafting and Canoeing

### Policy

- DDES will only raft with professional rafting companies or with certified guides.
- DDES will not raft on rivers above grade III whitewater as classified by AWA.
- PFD's will be properly worn by all adults and students when on the water and shall be the outermost layer.
- No diving or cliff jumping is allowed
- No swimming is allowed on rivers without a PFD.
- River helmets will be worn when staff assesses there is potential for head injury.

## Best Practice

- Before entering class II whitewater students should be taught the following: Paddle strokes, rescue techniques, hazard recognition, capsize procedures and whitewater swim position.
- Appropriate footwear will be worn both on and off the water.

## **Snowshoeing**

### **Policy**

- Before embarking on any non-resort snow activity the Adventure Coordinator will assess current snow and road conditions.
- DDES does not travel in avalanche terrain.
- The Adventure Coordinator will assess all non-resort destinations.

## **Solitude and Reflection**

### **Policy**

- All students will be shown the location, route to and staff camp before solitude and reflection.
- Students will not participate in water-based activities during solitude and reflection.
- Students will be shown the boundaries of their area and emergency procedures before solitude and reflection.
- Solitude and reflection will not take place during inclement weather.
- Solitude and reflection will have the following age based policies:
  - o K-1: 30 minutes and within sight **and** sound
  - o 2-3: 1 hour and within sight **and** sound
  - o 4-5: 2 hours and within sight **or** sound

## **New Programs and Program Changes**

Staff who have interest in helping develop new program areas and activities should approach the Adventure Coordinator with their ideas. The Adventure Coordinator and Administration must approve all new programs. Changes to existing policies must also be approved by both groups.



## **Behavioral and Motivational**

### **Suicide ideation and self-harm**

#### **Definitions**

**Suicide Ideation**- thoughts about or an unusual preoccupation with suicide. The range of suicide ideation varies greatly, from fleeting to detailed planning, role playing, and unsuccessful attempts, which may be deliberately constructed to fail or be discovered, or may be fully intended to result in death.

**Self-harm** - includes self-injury and self-poisoning and is defined as the intentional, direct injuring of body tissue most often done without suicidal intentions. The most common form of self-harm is skin-cutting but self-harm also covers a wide range of behaviors including, but not limited to, burning, scratching, banging or hitting body parts, interfering with wound healing, hair-pulling, and the ingestion of toxic substances or objects.

#### **Policy**

- All suicide ideation and self-harm will be taken seriously.
- Contact resources for assistance
  - o ([kristin.lynch@ddeschool.org](mailto:kristin.lynch@ddeschool.org)) - 303-437-2571
  - o Armando Geneyro - 720 423 3690 – Office Support
  - o Janna Barker - 720 423 2651 – Student Safety Coordinator
- Contact DDES Administration
- Follow up with Kristin to make sure parents have been contacted and necessary information has been transferred (note: **all guardians** listed need to be called in this situation).
- When back at school, follow up with parents and Kristin. Fill out any necessary paperwork.

### **Harassment**

#### **Definitions**

**Assault** - any unwanted contact that is associated with aggression or violence in any way, may also include threats by one individual or group against another.

**Harassment** - generally defined as behavior that attacks, disturbs or torments, whether verbal or physical in nature. It can take the form of slurs, comments, jokes, innuendoes, unwelcome compliments, pictures, cartoons, pranks, or other verbal or physical conduct which creates a perceived intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment, interfering with or unreasonably affecting an individual's work performance, or employment or educational opportunity.

**Sexual Abuse** - any unwanted contact, either overt or covert, from another individual. This can take the form of touching or being forced to touch another in a sexual context.

**Sexual Harassment** - unwelcome sexual advances, sexual gestures, sexual comments, pressure for sexual activity, threats, offensive jokes, ridicule, slurs, derogatory actions or remarks, etc.

#### **Policy**

- Harassment of a staff or student on the basis race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, creed, ancestry, citizenship, political affiliation, marital status, veteran status, status with regard to public assistance, or any other factor prohibited by law will not be tolerated.

- Staff will notify the administration when harassment, sexual harassment/abuse, or assault is witnessed or an accusation of it is.
- Staff should determine a response to the incident appropriate to the circumstances. If unsure about the correct course of action, staff should consult with administration.
- The parents/guardians of the students immediately involved in the incident should be contacted by the administration.

## **Transportation**

- Staff will follow all federal and state laws.
- Staff will complete training prior to driving students.
- Students will remain seated and wear seat belts while the vehicle is in motion.
- Aisles and doors will not be loaded in a way that block exits.
- Drivers are responsible for any ticket or citation they receive while driving for DDES.
- DDES vehicles will not pick up and/or transport hitchhikers.
- Parent drivers will complete a background check, automobile policy waver and have auto insurance with at least 100,000/300,000 in coverage.
- Cell phones, computers, or any other equipment that requires the driver to divert his or her attention from driving will not be used while driving.
- No drivers will operate a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or any mind altering or fatigue symptom inducing substance including illegal, prescription and over the counter substances.

## **Best Practice**

- DDES buses will have a chaperone when students are onboard.
- DDES will not operate buses between 12am-4am

## ***Emergency Field Procedures***

1. Survey the situation. Keep calm. Do not panic. Decide exactly what steps to take before acting.
2. Make sure the victim and all other persons are not exposed to further danger.
3. Perform necessary rescue or first-aid.

### **STEP 1: DETERMINE TYPE OF EMERGENCY (CLASS A or CLASS B):**

#### **A. Class A Emergency:** Requiring outside agency support.

Follow STEPS 2, STEP 3, AND STEP 4 for these situations:

1. Life threatening emergency (i.e. chest pain, diabetic coma).
2. Possibility of permanent disability or disfiguration (i.e. angulated fracture).
3. Injury requiring outside help, medical attention or evacuation.
4. Head or spinal injury resulting in unconsciousness.
5. Lost or missing group member for more than 2 hours.

#### **B. Class B Emergency:** Any emergency handled without outside support.

Follow STEPS 4, STEP 5, AND STEP 6 for these situations:

1. Lost group members (can develop into Class A emergency if not found within 2 hours).
2. Minor injury requiring field first-aid only.

### **STEP 2: PLAN OF ACTION: (Class A Emergency)**

After gaining control of the emergency and administering necessary first-aid:

1. Decide on type of support needed (ground team, ambulance, helicopter, etc.).
2. Identify persons and agencies to be notified (911, DDES, fire dept., sheriff's dept., etc.).
  3. Assess overall condition of other participants: don't forget to supervise entire group.
4. Continue to administer appropriate first-aid and monitor patient.

### **STEP 3: OBTAINING OUTSIDE HELP:**

#### **1. Call for assistance**

- **Know your exact location, basic patient information, request for responding parties**
- **Emergencies - 911**
- Poison Control - (303) 629-1123
  - DDES Contacts, please call in order
  - Erin – Office: (720) 424 2381 Cell: (720) 273 6036
  - Scott – Office: (720) 424 2351 Cell: (303) 887 8965
  - Katianne – Office: (720) 424 2353 Cell: (786) 252 3231
  - Letia– Office (720) 424 2352 Cell: (303) 585 0470

2. Continue to monitor patient until help arrives while filling out an Incident report form.
3. Designate leader to be in charge of others while awaiting rescue.

### **STEP 4: TAKING VICTIM TO THE HOSPITAL:**

1. Contact DDES – Call in order
  - Katianne – Office: (720) 424 2353 Cell: (786) 252 3231
  - Erin – Office: (720) 424 2381 Cell: (720) 273 6036
  - Scott – Office: (720) 424 2351 Cell: (303) 887 8965
  - Letia– Office (720) 424 2352 Cell: (303) 585 0470
2. DDES' senior staff person must go with the victim to the hospital.
3. If outside rescue support does not have space for extra passengers (e.g. helicopter evacuation) then staff should drive to the hospital as quickly and safely as possible.
4. **The DDES Director is responsible for notifying parents.**

### **STEP 5: LOST GROUP MEMBERS:**

1. Conduct an initial search for the victim in search groups of at least 2 persons, from the PLS (point last seen).
2. While searching, leave two persons at the PLS., and arrange meeting times and places with all searchers.
3. If the victim is not found within 2 hours, this converts into a class A emergency.

4. Contact the Sheriff's Department by calling 911 and notify them of the situation. Make sure the emergency runner information is available (persons name, age, description, PLS., etc.).

#### **STEP 6: MINOR INJURY REQUIRING FIELD FIRST-AID ONLY:**

1. Fill out the **Incident Report Form**: and turn the form in upon returning to DDES.

#### **STEP 7: ACCIDENTS INVOLVING VEHICLES:**

1. Stop immediately in the next safe area.
2. Assess the situation. *IF* there are injuries, return to step 1 administer care, and fill out the Accident Report Form.
3. Write down the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all witnesses and riders.
4. Write down the License numbers of all vehicles involved and other vehicles in the vicinity.
5. As a DDES representative, do not discuss the accident with anyone except the *police, insurance company representative, or office personnel.*
6. Call DDES
  - Katianna – Office: (720) 424 2353 Cell: (786) 252 3231
  - Erin – Office: (720) 424 2381 Cell: (720) 273 6036
  - Scott – Office: (720) 424 2351 Cell: (303) 887 8965
  - Jill – Office (720) 424 2361 Cell: (646) 369 4102

## Resources

### Water Treatment

<b>Volume of Water to be Treated</b>	<b>Bleach Solution to Add</b>
1 quart/1 liter	5 drops
1/2 gallon/2 quarts/2 liters	10 drops
1 gallon	1/4 teaspoon
5 gallons	1 teaspoon
10 gallons	2 teaspoons