

# Dragon Boat

GRADES 9-12 : INTERSCHOOL

## Introduction

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- All guidelines in the Manitoba School Boards Association [Swim Safe Programs: A Reference Guide for Schools](#) must be followed.
- Consult [Risk Management](#) for additional general safety requirements.
- If the activity is happening with an Outside Activity Provider then they must be presented with this activity page prior to the activity taking place. The Outside Activity Provider must meet the minimum requirements listed on this page. Consult [Outside Activity Providers](#) for more information on planning activities/trips using Outside Activity Providers.
- If this activity includes fitness development activities (training) and/or resistance/weight training consult [Fitness Activities](#) and [Weight Training](#) for additional safety requirements.
- Visit [Dragon Boat Canada](#) and the [International Dragon Boat Federation](#).

### [Equipment](#)

#### [Clothing/Footwear/Jewellery](#)

#### [Facilities](#)

#### [Environmental Considerations](#)

#### [Special Rules/Instructions](#)

#### [Supervision](#)

#### [Qualifications](#)

#### [First Aid](#)

#### [Swim Test](#)

#### [Info for Parents/Guardians](#)

#### [Definitions](#)

## Equipment

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- Determine that all equipment is safe for use (for example, no sharp corners, cracks, or splinters). Students must be encouraged to report equipment problems to the coach.
- Protective equipment must not be altered.

- A correctly fitting and [\*\*Transport Canada\*\*](#) approved Personal Floatation Device (P.F.D.) must be worn at all times on or near the water.
- Paddles and boats must be checked to assess that:
  - there are no splinters or cracks
  - the head, tail, drum, drummer's seat, and steering oar are securely fitted
  - the boat is not leaking and that bailers are in it
  - the centre seat is in place if it is a split boat
  - the buoyancy compartments are functional and sufficient to create positive buoyancy
  - the boat meets [\*\*Transport Canada's Safe Boating Guide\*\*](#) requirements for small crafts.
- Paddles must be the appropriate size for the age and size of students.
- An audible alarm signal (for example, whistle, air horn) must be carried by the steersperson (helmsman).
- A motorized safety boat must be equipped with a bull-horn/megaphone.

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

## **Clothing/Footwear/Jewellery**

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- Students must wear clothing and securely fastened foot protection appropriate for open-water dragon boat racing. A dry change of clothes must be available on shore.
- Coaches 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.
- The wearing of jewelry during practices and competitions must meet the rules of the governing body of the sport/activity, MHSAA, and the local athletic association. Consult the [\*\*General Safety Standards for Clothing, Footwear, and Jewelry\*\*](#) when jewelry is not addressed by the governing body of the sport/activity, MHSAA, or the local athletic association.
- 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.

## **Facilities**

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- Coaches must determine that all facilities are safe for use. Students must be encouraged to report facility concerns to the coach.
- Water and weather conditions must be appropriate for the skill level of the group.
- The coach must be familiar with the site and/or the site is commonly used for dragon boating.

## Controlled Area

- A confined location, such as a pool, lakefront, or slow-moving river must be available for the teaching of basic stroke skills.

## Environmental Considerations

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- When environmental conditions (for example, humidex warnings, thunderstorms, or higher elevations of pollutants) may pose a risk to student safety, teachers must follow their school board/school protocols and procedures related to:
  - environmental conditions (consult [\*\*Weather\*\*](#)); and
  - insects
- Students must receive instruction on safety procedures related to environmental conditions and be made aware of ways to protect themselves (for example, wearing a hat during hot sunny weather).
- 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 or facility/program coordinators), the higher standard of care must be followed.
- The coach must:
  - be aware of and respond to changing weather and water conditions prior to and during the activity; and
  - cancel, postpone or alter the activity if conditions put students' safety at an elevated level of risk (for example, wind, temperature, lightning storms, fog).
- Minimum visibility of 500 m (1640') is required.
- Dragon boating practices and competitions must be cancelled in adverse weather conditions.

## Special Rules/Instructions

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- All students must successfully complete the Canadian Swim to Survive Standard swim test to enter deep water. Consult [\*\*Swim Test\*\*](#) for additional information.
- When planning an activity, participant level of fitness, their previous training, and the intensity and length of time of the activity must all be taken into consideration.
- Skills must be taught in proper progression and all activities must be based on the skills that are taught.
- A proper warm-up and cool-down must be included.
- Be aware of students with a medical condition (for example, asthma, anaphylaxis, casts, previous concussion) that may affect their participation. Consult [\*\*Medical Conditions\*\*](#) for additional information.
- Students must not participate until they receive concussion information specific to school board procedures/policies, activity specific information on concussion prevention, the inherent risks of the activity, how to minimize the activity risks, and rules/procedures for safe play.
- Students must be instructed on the importance of reporting suspected concussion symptoms.
- Prior to participation, and according to school board procedures/policies, students must provide confirmation they've reviewed the concussion information.
- For all off-site activities refer to the school board's transportation procedures/policies related to appropriate methods of transportation, appropriate parent/guardian communication, and obtaining parent/guardian permission.
- Coaches must teach and strictly enforce sport specific rules, fair play principles, and sportsmanship.
- To prevent dehydration, students must have access to water fountains or personal water bottles before, during, and after the activity.
- Students may not share water bottles.
- Parents/guardians must be informed of the school board's initiation/hazing policy.
- Spectators are welcome at interschool sport activities so long as they do not present a safety concern. Hosting schools/facilities must identify locations for spectators that ensures both athlete and spectator safety.
- Schools are responsible for supervising its own spectators. Schools are to follow their school board supervisor to spectator ratios.

## **Steersperson**

- Every boat requires a qualified steersperson.

- Steersperson may sit or stand while steering.
- Steersperson is the in-charge person and outranks all other people in the boat.
- Steersperson must be an employee of the Dragon Boat facility or approved by the Dragon Boat facility.
- Steersperson for each boat must demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:
  - steersperson must read and understand [Transport Canada's Safe Boating Guide](#)
  - be able to manage the team and exercise authority over team members
  - load the boat
  - balance the boat
  - maintain a straight course at full racing speed with a full crew of 18-20 paddlers plus drummer
  - steer a figure eight course around two buoys at normal speed with a full crew, in both directions, or in the absence of buoys, steer a set course which includes both left and right angled turns
  - execute sideways maneuvers without going forwards
  - turn the boat through 360 degrees in both directions without the use of paddlers
  - guide the boat forward in a straight line without the use of paddlers
  - guide the boat in reverse for 50m (164') with the use of paddlers
  - execute an emergency stop from racing speed to full stop
  - execute safe approaches to a jetty/pontoon/docks in still and windy conditions
  - manage the unloading of the team members
  - secure the boat and determine that all gear is put away correctly

## Safety Procedures

- Students must be informed of available safety equipment and how to use it.
- Before the start of each practice session, inform someone (facilities staff member) of the beginning and ending time on water.
- Should the team require assistance at any time during the practice session, the drummer or steersperson must raise their hands, accompanied by a series of three short bursts through the sounding device provided to signal the first aid provider/safety boat.

- Before the start of each practice session, all paddlers are required to pair up with the paddler beside them, in case of emergencies (buddy system). The first pair is also responsible for the drummer and the last pair for the steersperson.
- Steersperson must be able to use, and crew must be able to correctly respond to, common dragon boat racing commands.

## **Emergency Procedures**

- All coaches must be knowledgeable of the established safety and emergency procedures. Coaches must outline these procedures to paddlers, steersperson and other coaches. If standards vary between the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education and an activity provider, implement the higher standards.
- In the event that a boat is swamped, the following procedures must be followed:
  - steersperson must be aware of any special conditions that may apply to an individual paddler
  - steersperson must take charge of the crew until the motorized safety boat arrives
  - the crew must hold on to the boat (team members must be instructed not to swim to shore)
  - each team member must determine that their partner is in view (buddy system)
  - each team member must inform the steersperson if partner is missing (buddy system)
  - the approach of the safety boat must not endanger (for example, trap) any participants in the water
  - each team member must follow steersperson's instructions
  - if boat has sufficient flotation, crew must get into boat and paddle to shore. If not, hang onto boat and follow instructions of steersperson.
- In case of an emergency, a pre-determined return route must be established.

## **Supervision**

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- All activities must be supervised.
- The level of supervision must 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.

- Coach liaison(s) will provide, at the minimum, in-the-area supervision for all practices, games, and competitions.
- When a school team is traveling off-school site, coach liaison(s) must accompany the team and must be accessible at all times.
- Consult school board and local athletic association rules and regulations with regard to coach and coach liaison duties and adhere to the higher standard of care.

## Supervision Ratios for Instructional Time

- One coach/instructor per 10 athletes during initial on-the-water instruction.
- After initial instruction, 2 supervisors are required per dragon boat.
- One coach/supervisor must be on the dragon boat. The other could be on land, in a motorized safety boat, or in the dragon boat.

## Qualifications

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### Coaching Qualifications

- At least one coach must possess one of the following coaching qualifications:
  - [\*\*Dragon Boat Canada\*\*](#)'s Coaching Community Dragon Boat - Level 1 with a Pleasure Craft Operators license
  - 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 Manitoba Physical Activity Safety in Schools.
  - Past experience within the last 3 years as a coach in dragon boat racing, having knowledge of the activity (for example, appropriate skills and progressions) and where safety is addressed as outlined in Manitoba Physical Activity Safety in Schools.
- Additional information on sport-specific NCCP training can be found at [coach.ca](http://coach.ca).
- All match officials must demonstrate sufficient experience officiating the sport. It is preferable that all match officials be sport-specific certified.
- The head coach must demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the sport, skills, and strategies relevant to the age and skill of the participants. This must be demonstrated to the principal or designate.

- Coaches must follow and implement the criteria outlined in [\*\*Coaches Expectations\*\*](#) and/or the standards/criteria established by their school/school board.

## **Steersperson Qualifications**

- The dragon boat steersperson must possess one of the following qualifications:
  - Dragon Boat Canada's Steering Accreditation Course
  - 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 Manitoba Physical Activity Safety in Schools.
  - Past experience within the last 3 years as a steersperson in dragon boat racing, having knowledge of the activity (for example, appropriate skills and progressions) and where safety is addressed as outlined in Manitoba Physical Activity Safety in Schools.

## **Lifeguard Qualifications**

(The lifeguard is applicable for the swim test only.)

- A lifeguard must be 18 years of age or older and possess the minimum certifications:
  - National Lifeguard certification (appropriate to the venue being visited, e.g. pool, waterfront, waterpark)
  - Standard First Aid certification
  - CPR-C certification (may be included in the standard first aid training)
- The lifeguard certificate must have been issued within the past two years.
- A student may not act as a lifeguard if they are participating in the activity.
- Verified copies of lifeguard certification must be available in the pool area.

## **First Aid**

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- 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.

- An individual 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\*\*](#)).
- Schools must identify an individual to provide first aid to injured students.
- As a minimum, this individual must have 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. This individual must be aware of the school board's concussion protocol, must follow the school's first aid emergency action plan (including access to a vehicle for transportation of an injured student), and be present and readily accessible during the all practices/competitions. This individual must not be a participant in the activity.
- For additional information consult [\*\*First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response\*\*](#).

## **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 instructor, trip guide or individual who meets the first aid certification.
- A motorized safety craft must be in the water and accessible while students are dragon boating. The operator of the motorized safety craft must have a Pleasure Craft Operator Card and must have experience in navigating the craft. The motorized safety craft must not pose a risk to the safety of the dragon boats (for example, create a wake).
- No safety craft is required if instruction is taking place in a pool.
- Safety boats are optional when in a controlled area (for example, a confined location, such as a pool, shallow waters, lakefront, or slow moving river). Other procedures for rescuing in a controlled area must be developed and in place with appropriate rescue individuals prior to dragon boating. Safety boats are required at all other times.

## **Swim Test**

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### **Swim Test for Watercraft Activities**

- All students must successfully complete the Canadian Swim to Survive Standard swim test to participate. The Swim to Survive Standard is expressed in a continuous skill sequence of:
  - Rolling entry (backwards or forward) into deep water at 2.75m (9') minimum depth

- Tread water for 1 minute
- Swim 50m (164') continuously, any stroke
- Demonstrate the ability to put on a personal flotation device (P.F.D.) while in the water.
- Students who do not pass the swim test are not allowed to participate in the watercraft activity.
- The swim test must be administered by a certified lifeguard.
- The swim test must be completed within the school year in which the activity is taking place.
- In lieu of completing the swim test, students may provide proof of Bronze Star certification or higher.
- Results of the swim test must be documented and communicated as per school board policy (for example, to the student, teacher, principal, parents/guardians, trip guide(s), lifeguards, aquatic instructor, or outside provider).

## Information for Parents/Guardians

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- Parents/Guardians must be provided with a letter of informed consent which outlines the inherent risk of an aquatic activity. Parents must acknowledge the risk and provide permission for their child/ward to attend.
- The Manitoba School Boards Association [Swim Safe Programs: A Reference Guide for Schools](#) includes a sample parent/guardian letter.

## Definitions

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- **Personal Flotation Device (PFD):**
  - According to the [Canadian Red Cross](#), “A Canadian approved PFD is designed to keep you afloat in the water. PFDs were designed for use in recreational boating and are generally smaller, less bulky and more comfortable than lifejackets. They have less flotation than lifejackets, and have limited turning capacity, but are available in a variety of styles and colours.”
- **Coach:**

- A coach is any individual approved by the principal or designate (for example, teacher, school administrator, or non-teacher/volunteer) responsible for an interschool sport/activity. All new coaches must go through an approval process by the school administrator/designate to determine the coach's knowledge, experience and, where appropriate, qualifications (for example, higher risk sports) to safely coach the sport (consult [\*\*Coaches Expectations\*\*](#)).

- **Coach Liaison:**

- A coach liaison is defined as a teacher, principal, or vice-principal with current teacher certification and under contract by the school/school board who will provide appropriate support to a non-teacher/volunteer coach. Consult [\*\*Coaches Expectations\*\*](#) for more information.

- **Supervisor:**

- A supervisor is defined as a teacher, vice-principal or principal with current Manitoba Teachers' Society certification and under contract by a school/school board. The supervisor is legally responsible for the students.

- **Supervision:**

- The vigilant overseeing of a sport for regulation or direction.
- All facilities, equipment, and sports have inherent risks, but the level of risk decreases significantly with effective supervision
- Manitoba Physical Activity Safety in Schools has designated three categories of supervision: Constant Visual Supervision, On-Site Supervision, and In-The-Area Supervision. The categories take into consideration the activity specific level of risk, the participants' skills, and the participant level of experience. The three levels of supervision are not hierarchical but represent the type of supervision that an activity requires and the type of supervision that is inherently possible.

- **Types of Supervision:**

- **Constant Visual Supervision:**

- The coach is physically present, watching the activity in question. Only one activity requiring "Constant Visual Supervision" may take place while other activities are going on.

- For example, during a track and field practice, some students are practicing high jump, some practicing relay, and others practicing distance running. The coach is at and is watching high jump.

- **In-The-Area Supervision:**

- "In-The-Area Supervision" requires the coach to be readily accessible. The coach could be in the gymnasium while another activity is taking place in an area adjacent to the gymnasium.
- "In-The-Area Supervision" occurs during activities in which students may be out of sight for periods of time and the location of the coach is not nearby (for example, alpine skiing, cross-country running) or during activities where single or multiple "In-the-Area" activities are happening at the same time (for example, a gym divided by a curtain or wall with badminton or table tennis on either side of the wall).
- The following criteria must be in place:
  - The coach is circulating and is readily accessible
  - The location of the coach has been communicated to students and volunteers;

- **On-Site Supervision:**

- The coach is present but not necessarily constantly viewing one specific activity. Momentary presence in adjoining rooms (for example, equipment room) to the gym is considered part of "On-Site Supervision".
- For example, during a track and field practice, some students are practicing high jump, some practicing relay, and others practicing distance running. Students participating on the track (relay) can be seen by the coach.

Last Published

Mon, 09/13/2021 - 12:35