

	Administrative Procedure	
	Subject	Closure – Severe Weather and Student Transportation
	AP Code	553

Background

The school director is authorized to dismiss students, discontinue transportation services, and/or close the school in emergency situations.

Procedures

1. Responsibilities of the school director
 - 1.1. The school director, in consultation with the principal, may close the school.
 - 1.2. The school director or designate shall inform bus drivers when classes have been rescheduled, students have been dismissed, or the school has been closed.
 - 1.3. The school director shall receive, review, and maintain on file reports from the principal regarding the stopping of any operation of buses or the school.
 - 1.4. The school director will cancel applicable bus routes when the temperature including wind chill reaches -40°C or lower.
 - 1.5. Buses may be cancelled pending consideration for the following factors:
 - 1.5.1. Severely drifted or extremely icy roads.
 - 1.5.2. Limited visibility because of fog or blowing snow.
 - 1.5.3. Other environmental conditions are typically announced by Environment Canada through its telephone information services, website, or on a local radio station.
 - 1.6. The decision to cancel morning buses shall be made by 6:00 a.m.
 - 1.7. The decision to cancel afternoon buses shall be made no later than 2:00 p.m.
 - 1.8. If a bus is cancelled in the morning due to cold weather, it will not operate in the afternoon.
 - 1.9. School buses provided for out-of-school curricular and extracurricular activities are also cancelled on days that transportation services are cancelled.
2. Responsibilities of the principal
 - 2.1. The principal shall facilitate communication among the school, bus drivers, and parents or guardians.
 - 2.2. The principal shall inform the school director whenever bus operations have been cancelled due to weather conditions.
 - 2.3. In the event bus service is cancelled pursuant to 1.5, the principal shall notify the bus drivers and the school community through local radio stations, social media, and internal communication.
 - 2.4. The principal shall ensure the update of the school's website and social media pages and will notify news media to broadcast pertinent information to parents and students.
 - 2.5. In consultation with the school director, the principal is responsible for deciding when to relocate students or, when applicable, to reschedule classes to ensure the safety and well-being of students.
 - 2.6. When students are relocated, the principal is to arrange for each student to be directed to a safe, supervised location and then inform respective parents or guardians either directly or indirectly.

- 2.7. If necessary, the principal is responsible for billeting students and staff at the school. The school will assume any costs incurred.
 - 2.8. The principal is to maintain a record of emergency residences for all bus students.
 - 2.9. The principal is to ensure that the school is accessible to students during normal school hours, when classes have been dismissed, or when the school has been closed.
 - 2.10. Due to the diversity of weather conditions within the community, the principal may contact the school director seeking directions for school closure in response to local weather conditions.
3. Responsibilities of bus drivers
 - 3.1. Each bus driver in rural areas is responsible for canceling a route to ensure the safety and well-being of his/her passengers. This includes school buses used for transporting students for other educational and school-related activities.
 - 3.2. Having made such a decision, the bus driver is to inform the principal or designate by text, email, or telephone.
 - 3.3. Under no circumstances should buses start on the route at the height of a winter storm.
 - 3.4. Under no circumstances shall bus drivers commence their routes prior to normal departure time.
 - 3.5. If the decision is made before students have been picked up from home in the rural area, the driver is to inform parents or guardians of all passengers that the bus will not operate.
 - 3.6. If the decision to stop operation is made after students have been picked up, the driver is to arrange to deliver each student to a safe, supervised destination. In the rural area, drivers are to inform parents or guardians directly or indirectly of the location of the students. The driver must also inform the principal.
4. Responsibilities of teachers and other school personnel
 - 4.1. Except when notified that the school is closed, all teachers and personnel are expected to be in attendance for the purpose of performing their normal or related duties. Personnel are not to lose pay when informed that the school has been closed.
 - 4.2. Upon receipt of a written explanation, the school director may deal with individual instances of absence due to weather or other hazardous situations.
5. Responsibilities of parents and guardians
 - 5.1. Parents or guardians of all bus students are to arrange for appropriate emergency residences for the individual students and to inform the school and bus driver of those arrangements.
 - 5.2. Parents and guardians always have the right to keep their children at home during severe weather conditions or when, in the considered opinion of the parent or guardian, they have concerns regarding the safety of their children. They also have the right to drive their children to school if the bus does not run.
 - 5.3. Parents or guardians are responsible to ensure that their children are appropriately dressed for weather conditions.

References

The Education Act, 1995 – sections 85, 87, 194, 195, 196, 197

Date Adopted

September 1, 2024

Revised
