

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Background

The Superintendent or designate has the authority to close schools in the Division or in specified areas of the Division and to suspend bus service when weather or other conditions are deemed to be hazardous to the safety of students and staff.

Parents are expected to ensure that their children are clothed adequately for the weather conditions and to make decisions regarding keeping their children at home if they deem it is unsafe for them to walk to the school or a designated bus stop. Parents are also expected to be alert to weather conditions that could adversely affect their children and to listen to the radio for bulletins regarding school closure.

Procedures

1. School bus service shall be suspended at a temperature of -40°C as measured at the appropriate Environmental Weather Service Centre. School bus service may also be suspended due to unsafe weather or road conditions. The Director of Transportation shall consult with the police, the AMA and the local Municipality Weather Office before making a recommendation to the Superintendent regarding suspension of bus service.
2. The Principal shall communicate school closure procedures to each family at the beginning of the school year. The Principal shall also develop a communication plan that will allow for the efficient fanning out of information.
3. Whenever school bus services are suspended by the Superintendent or designate, schools shall remain open to all students unless announced otherwise.
 - 3.1 On scheduled Diploma Examination dates, students who arrive at school must be allowed to write the examination.
4. The Principal shall develop a contingency plan for the number of staff to be at the school for the purpose of receiving students, answering telephone inquiries, and other duties when schools have been closed. The plan shall be submitted to the Superintendent by the end of September annually.
5. Suspension of school bus services and school closures may be limited to a certain region of the Division.
6. The Superintendent and/or designate shall decide on school bus suspension where possible before 6:00 a.m. or the previous evening if conditions are such that it is obvious that bus service should not commence.

7. Families, contractors and bus operators will be advised of cancellations using a call out and email system. The information regarding busing services will be posted on the Division website. As well, the main telephone message system will carry pertinent information.
8. When weather conditions deteriorate during the day and bus service is suspended or bus schedules require substantial alteration, announcements will be broadcast using an email and call out system. Families, contractors and bus operators will be advised of cancellations using an email and call out system.
9. If and when schools are closed prior to normal dismissal times, no students shall be permitted to leave school or a school bus if contact and arrangements cannot be made with the parents.
10. All staff members are expected to report to work except when roads are impassable. If the staff member is unable to report to work the staff member is to notify the supervisor immediately of this circumstance.

Reference: Section 11, 33, 52, 53, 60, 196, 197, 222 Education Act
Employment Standards Act