



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Administrative Procedure Number: APE 040

POLICY STATEMENT

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board is committed to having our Catholic schools open each day of the school year. Recognizing that emergencies such as inclement weather conditions can occur, the safety of our students shall be the prime consideration when decisions are made to cancel student transportation or to close schools due to inclement weather.

REFERENCES

Northeastern Catholic District School Board Policy and Procedures

E-35 Inclement Weather

E-36 Emergency School Closure

APE 029 Emergency School Closure

North East Tri-Board Student Transportation

OP01: Policy and Procedures for Cancellation of School Bus Transportation due to Inclement Weather

DEFINITIONS

Inclement Weather Day

A day where road or weather conditions make it impossible to operate a school bus safely. In situations where buses are cancelled due to inclement weather affecting road conditions, the day shall be designated an Inclement Weather Day. Inclement Weather Days do not result in Emergency School Closure Days unless the conditions meet the emergency school closure day criteria as well.

PROCEDURES

1.0 GENERAL

- 1.1 The safety and welfare of students is the fundamental principle for all decisions.
- 1.2 In keeping with the primary concern of student safety, the Supervisor of Transportation or designate may cancel transportation before the school day if significant risk exists for students.
- 1.3 Every effort will be made not to have students transported to/from school in treacherous conditions.
- 1.4 Cancellations are for the entire day.

- 1.5 Routes cancelled in the morning will not operate in the afternoon and anticipated severe afternoon weather, based on reports from Environment Canada, may necessitate cancellations in the morning.
- 1.6 The Director of Education or designate may decide to dismiss students because of inclement weather.

2.0 CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION BEFORE 7:00 A.M.

- 2.1 School bus operators who service the area(s) affected by the inclement weather will communicate with each other. The designated operator will contact the Supervisor of Transportation or designate with their recommendation.
- 2.2 When a decision is made to cancel transportation, then the Supervisor of Transportation or designate will place a notification of all bus cancellations on the www.geogquery.netribus.ca website prior to 7:00 a.m.:
 - i) School buses are cancelled for the three district school boards in the North East Tri-Board Transportation Services, specifying areas/zones affected, companies involved, and where appropriate, the individual schools it pertains to and companies involved;
 - ii) School will remain open; and
 - iii) It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to determine whether or not it is safe for a student to leave for school at any time particularly when severe weather conditions prevail. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to get the student to and from school.
- 2.3 The notice will also appear on the NCDSB website.
- 2.4 The Tri-Board Transportation Consortium will inform the Director of Education, Principals and Superintendents by electronic notification.
- 2.5 Unless schools are declared school when school bus services are halted, schools will be open to students attending at the discretion of their parents/guardians.
- 2.6 Where transportation service have been cancelled, the Principal or designate along with the custodial staff will ensure that the school building is opened by 8:30 a.m. to accommodate those students who arrive.
- 2.7 When regular attendance taking shows that a student is absent and the parents/guardians has not contacted the school, the parent/guardian will then be contacted to report the absence and confirm that the student is safe.

3.0 CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION AFTER 9:00 A.M.

- 3.1 School bus operators who service the area(s) affected by the inclement weather will communicate with each other. The designated operator will contact the Supervisor of Transportation or designate with their recommendation. The Supervisor of

Transportation or designate will communicate the recommendation to the Director of Education or designate.

- 3.2 The Director of Education or designate will decide if the students will be released prior to 11:15 a.m., whenever possible.
- 3.3 The Director of Education or designate will inform the appropriate supervisory officers, principals, and confirm the decision of the Board to the Supervisor of Transportation, who will then coordinate services with the bus operators.
- 3.4 Each school shall be responsible for the formulation of a school plan wherein parents/guardians, students, and teachers are made aware of procedures and contingency arrangements.

4.0 STUDENT SAFETY AT BUS STOPS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their child is not left unattended at a bus stop when school bus transportation has been cancelled.
- 4.2 During severely cold weather parents/guardians should make arrangements to ensure that their child gets on and off the bus in a timely manner.
- 4.3 It is the school bus operator's responsibility to ascertain that parents/guardians are present before leaving Kindergarten students at a designated bus stop. This is critical to avoid serious consequences, especially during cold weather periods. School bus operator will be advised by the school of other arrangements, in any extenuating situations. School bus operators must notify the Principal immediately or any incomplete routes.
- 4.4 If after dismissal, road and weather conditions prevent a bus from completing its route, the bus driver is to return the students to the home school, or an alternate location determined by the Principal or designate where required.

5.0 SCHOOL EMERGENCY PLAN

- 5.1 Every school must develop a School Emergency Plan to be used when bad/inclement weather conditions worsen or in times of emergency situations to the point where it becomes unsafe and impossible to send students home. The procedures in the School Emergency Plan will include, but are not limited to:
 - i) Alternate sites in the case of evacuation;
 - ii) Alternative accommodations for those students whose parents are not at home (up to and including Grade 6 students);
 - iii) Alternative accommodations for those students with special education needs who may be at risk due to the adverse weather;
 - iv) Names and telephone numbers of parents/guardians or of an alternate contact;

- v) Names of staff members to remain at school in the event that students are stranded overnight (where possible Principals will give due consideration to personal circumstances in determining who will remain at school);
- vi) Process to communicate School Emergency Plan with families early in the school year;
- vii) Special arrangements for students/families with whom communication is difficult.

5.2 In the event that a school must implement a School Emergency Plan, the Principal and staff are responsible for supervising all students until the end of the regular school day or until arrangements for the supervision of students have been made in accordance with the School Emergency Plan.

5.3 The School Emergency Plan will be shared with staff at least two times annually.

6.0 STAFF DUTY TO REPORT TO WORK

6.1 In the event that weather conditions make travel hazardous but the school remains open, staff members are expected to make every reasonable effort to report for duty at their respective place or work for the commencement of the regular school day or as soon as possible thereafter. Alternatively, the staff member will attempt to reach another school close to their residence. The staff member shall report to their principal, manager or supervisor, a delay in arrival or a decision to report to an alternate school as soon as reasonably possible. There will be no loss of pay for a delayed arrival at a school.

- i) The responsibility for determining reasonable effort rests with the Principal, Manager, or Supervisor, and will take into consideration prevailing overall weather and road conditions.
- ii) The NCDSB recognizes that there may be extenuating circumstances (i.e. road closures) affecting a staff member's ability to report to work. In such a case, the Principal, Manager or Supervisor shall consult with the Board through the Manager of Human Resources. Where it is determined that it was impossible for the staff member to report to work, no loss of pay shall occur.

6.2 On inclement weather days, regular schedules and duties may be modified by the Principal to ensure the integrity of educational programming and student safety.

6.3 Possible lateness in reporting or inability to report at all because of inclement weather conditions will be reported by telephone to the Principal, Manager, or Supervisor by the staff member as soon as possible. When a staff member reports late to school due to inclement weather conditions, there will be no deduction in pay.

6.4 Where it is necessary for schools to dismiss students early because of inclement weather or adverse road conditions, Principals may allow staff to begin their journey home before dismissal time, bearing in mind the appropriate supervision of students and the distance each staff member has to travel.

- 6.5 When schools are CLOSED prior to the commencement of the regular school day under the authority of the Director of Education, staff is not expected to report for duty unless specific arrangements are made for special purposes. Pay for such days or part-days when schools are officially closed will be automatic. There will be no change to leave entry for staff members who were not scheduled to be at work on a day where a decision is made to close a school.
- 6.6 The Manager of Plant, in conjunction with the Principal, is responsible for assigning all duties and assignments to custodial staff on inclement weather days. Under the supervision of the Principal, the custodial staff is required to:
- i) Ensure the school doors are open to accommodate those students who arrive on inclement weather days;
 - ii) Remain in the building until such time as the building is secured and cleared of all occupants (including child care centers, before/after school programs) when early school dismissal is necessary;
 - iii) Ensure the school premises are secured and free of any occupants on inclement weather days. At the discretion of the Manager of Plant, in consultation with the Principal, custodial staff members may be required to work their normal or extended hours on inclement weather days.
- 6.7 The Principal, Manager, or Supervisor will advise the Human Resource Department by electronic memo, of the names of all staff members who were absent on the inclement weather day.

7.0 RELATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

Nil.

Director of Education: *Tricia Stefanie Weltz*
Date: March 2021