# Northeastern Catholic District School Board

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

**Administrative Procedure Number: APE035**

## 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

North East Tri-Board Student Transportation
- 0P01: Policy and Procedures for Cancellation of School Bus Transportation due to Inclement Weather

NCDSB Policy
- E-35 Inclement Weather
- E-36 Emergency School Closure

NCDSB Administrative Procedure
- APE036 Emergency School Closure

## 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 Executive Director of the Student Transportation Consortium or designate may cancel transportation before the school day if significant risk exists for students. The local bus operator will make this decision for Bishop Belleau School, in conjunction with the Principal.

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, unless otherwise communicated.

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 Chief Executive Officer or designate may decide to dismiss students because of inclement weather.

**2.0 CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION BEFORE 7:00 A.M. (EXCEPT BBS)**

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 Executive Director of the Student Transportation Consortium or designate with their recommendation.

2.2 When a decision is made to cancel transportation, then the Executive Director of the Student Transportation Consortium or designate, will place a notification of all bus cancellations on the website prior to 7:00 a.m., https://busplannerweb.neobus.ca/Alerts . This will include/mean:

i) School buses are cancelled for the consortium, 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 link will also appear on the NCDSB website.

2.4 The Executive Director of the Student Transportation Consortium will inform the Chief Executive Officer, Principals and Superintendents by electronic notification.

2.5 Unless schools are declared closed when school bus services are cancelled, schools will be open to students attending at the discretion of their parents/guardians.

2.6 Where transportation services 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 – BISHOP BELLEAU SCHOOL

3.1 In all instances of bus cancellation for Bishop Belleau School, the decision shall be jointly made by the Principal and the local bus operator. The Superintendent of Education and Chief Executive Officer shall be informed accordingly, and prior to communicating the decision with families.

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

4.1 School bus operators who service the area(s) affected by the inclement weather will communicate with each other. The designated operator will contact the Executive Director of the Student Transportation Consortium or designate with their recommendation. The Executive Director of the Student Transportation Consortium or designate will communicate the recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer or designate.

4.2 The Chief Executive Officer or designate will decide if the students will be released prior to 11:15 a.m., whenever possible.

4.3 The Chief Executive Officer or designate will inform the appropriate supervisory officers, principals, and confirm the decision of the Board to the Executive Director of the Student Transportation Consortium, who will then coordinate services with the bus operators.

4.4 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.

## 5.0 STUDENT SAFETY AT BUS STOPS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

5.1 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.

5.2 During severely cold weather parents/guardians should make arrangements to ensure that their child gets on and off the bus safely.

5.3 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 of any incomplete routes.

5.4 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.

## 6.0 SCHOOL EMERGENCY PLAN

6.1 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;
iii) Alternative accommodations for those students with special education needs;
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.

6.2 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.

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

## 7.0 STAFF DUTY TO REPORT TO WORK

7.1 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 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.
iii) Staff who are unable to report to their assigned school fall under the direction of the Principal of the school they report to, and duties shall be assigned accordingly.

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

7.3 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.

7.4 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.

7.5 When schools are CLOSED prior to the commencement of the regular school day under the authority of the Chief Executive Officer, 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.

7.6 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 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.

7.7 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 due to extenuating circumstances affecting their ability to report to work.

**8.0 RELATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS**

Nil.

**Chief Executive Officer:** *Tricia Stefanic Weltz*

**Date:** March 2024