



INCLEMENT WEATHER

Procedures

1.0 School Closures due to Plant Breakdown

School closures due to plant breakdown are to be decided in consultation with the Regional Superintendent or in the Superintendent's absence the Director of Education. All staff are expected to report to work at the affected work site or an alternate location as required and announced.

2.0 Cancellation of School Bus Transportation PRIOR to 9:00 a.m.

Cancellation of school bus transportation prior to the commencement of the regular school day will be a decision taken and acted upon by the Transportation Supervisor or designate as prescribed in the Joint Transportation Policy Procedures as follows:

The primary concern is the safety and welfare of pupils. Therefore, the Transportation Supervisor or designate may cancel transportation before the school day if significant risk exists for the safety of pupils.

- 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 Transportation Supervisor or designate with their recommendation prior to 6:30 a.m.
- 2.2 The designated operator will consult with the Transportation Supervisor or designate to confirm that it is unsafe to transport the students to school.
- 2.3 The Transportation Supervisor or designate will communicate with all radio stations, and post notification on the geoquery.netribus.ca website under the [Delays and Cancellations](#) Notifications section, prior to 7:00 a.m. and provide the following information:
 - 2.3.1 school buses are cancelled for all Boards, specifying areas affected, and where appropriate, the individual schools it pertains to and companies involved;
 - 2.3.2 schools will remain open unless otherwise posted; and
 - 2.3.3 it is the responsibility of the parent 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 to get the student to and from school, and to notify the school if the student will not be attending.
- 2.4 The Transportation Supervisor or designate will inform the Director of Education or designate.
- 2.5 Where transportation services have been cancelled, the Principal or designate will ensure that the school building is opened by 8:30 a.m. to accommodate those students who arrive.
- 2.6 When regular attendance-taking shows that a student is absent and his or her parents have not contacted the school, the parents will then be contacted to report the absence and confirm that the child is safe.

3.0 Student Safety at Bus Stops during Severe Cold & Inclement Weather

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 During severely cold weather parents/guardians should make arrangements to ensure that their child gets on and off the bus in a timely manner.
- 3.3 It is the school bus operator's responsibility to ascertain that parents/guardians are present before leaving Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten pupils at home. This is very important in order to avoid serious consequences, especially during cold weather periods. School bus operators will be advised of other arrangements by the school. Principals must be notified immediately of any incomplete routes.

4.0 Inclement Weather Conditions and Employees Reporting to Work

Staff should adhere to the wording addressing inclement weather in their respective collective agreements and to the following expectations.

All employees are expected to make every effort to attend work regularly. When schools/worksites are open, the expectation that all employees attend work remains in effect. At the same time, however, it is not intended or expected that employees should subject themselves to extreme risks in attempting to get to their work sites during inclement weather.

When schools or administration sites are closed under the authority of the Director of Education or designate, employees at those sites are not expected to attend work at their home school site. It is the expectation that employees will report to an alternate work site unless it is not safe or feasible to do so.

When schools or administration sites remain open, employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend work at their home school site, or if not safe or feasible to do so, at an alternate work site.

- Reasonable lateness on inclement weather days will be considered acceptable.
- Employees should make an informed assessment of the impact of the inclement weather on their ability to get to their worksite safely;
- Employees should make prior arrangements for use of carpooling or taxi services if necessary;
- If the preferred option of attending at their own worksite is not tenable, employees should report to the most accessible alternate District School Board Ontario North East worksite;
- If the secondary option of reporting to an alternate worksite is similarly not tenable, the third option is to remain at home.
- Employees arriving at a work site need to report to, and sign-in at, the main office.

4.1 Regular Worksite

For employees who are able to attend at their regular worksite, they will be regarded as being "in attendance". This will also be the case for any employee who attends late as a result of the conditions or is dismissed early in response to deteriorating weather conditions.

4.2 Alternate Worksite

For employees who choose to and/or are able to attend at an alternate worksite, they will be regarded as being "in attendance". Elementary school employees should report to the nearest Elementary school location if possible. Secondary school employees should report to the nearest Secondary school location if possible.

When necessary, Elementary school employees may report to a Secondary school location and Secondary staff may report to an Elementary school location if it is a safer alternative. This is conditional upon advising their regular Principal/Immediate Supervisor (or designate) of the site they plan to attend, and discussing with the hosting Principal/Immediate Supervisor the duties and responsibilities to be performed at the alternate worksite. In such cases, these duties shall be within the parameters of the employee's normal role, under the direction of the host Principal/Immediate Supervisor. It is the obligation of any employee that reports to an alternate worksite to inform their regular Principal/Immediate Supervisor.

4.3 Remaining at Home

If an employee decides they are unable to travel to their home worksite or an alternate worksite, and the employee does not report for work, there is:

- An obligation to notify the Principal/Immediate Supervisor (or designate) by telephone of this initial decision (voice mail message not acceptable); and
- An ongoing obligation to re-assess the road and weather conditions throughout the day, and stay in contact with the Principal/Immediate Supervisor (or designate) about the appropriateness of attempting to report for work at their worksite or an alternate worksite later in the day.

When the Principal or designate is satisfied that the above has been met, the employee will be regarded as being absent due to Inclement Weather. Staff are responsible for entering their absence into SFE, unless otherwise advised. Final approval for inclement weather absences will be made by the Superintendent of Human Resources.

In the absence of a specific provision in a collective agreement Casual Employees will not be paid, unless advised by the Principal/Supervisor that their service is required, if:

- the school is closed
- busses are cancelled
- Inclement weather prevents a casual worker from reporting to work

Casual employees are obligated to contact the school Principal or designate on days of inclement weather or bus cancellation to inquire whether their services are required for the day prior to the start of the school day and prior to attending work.

5.0 Cancellation of School Bus Transportation AFTER 9:00 a.m.

5.1 Early Dismissal

- 5.1.1 The decision shall be made following consultation and confirmation from the weather offices, the Ministry of Transportation and the Ontario Provincial Police, and released prior to 11:15 a.m. whenever possible.
- 5.1.2 Board designates shall inform the bus operators, appropriate Supervisory Officers and Principals or designates of the decision.
- 5.1.3 Each school shall be responsible for the formulation of a school plan wherein parents, pupils and teachers are made aware of procedures and contingency arrangements.
- 5.1.4 The procedures outlined in the school plan shall also include:
 - i) Alternative accommodations for those pupils whose parents are not at home (up to and including grade six).
 - ii) Alternative accommodations for those pupils with special physical needs who may be at risk due to the adverse weather.
 - iii) Names of staff members to remain at school in the event that pupils are stranded overnight.
 - iv) A communication plan.

5.2 School Emergency Plan

Every school must employ a School Emergency Plan when inclement weather conditions worsen to the point where it becomes unsafe and impossible to send students home. The procedures in the School Emergency Plan shall also include:

- 5.2.1 Alternative accommodations for those pupils whose parents are not at home (up to and including Grade 6).
- 5.2.2 Alternative accommodations for those pupils with special needs who may be at risk due to the adverse weather.
- 5.2.3 Names of staff members to remain at school in the event that pupils are stranded overnight.
- 5.2.4 A communication plan.

The School Emergency Plan will be forwarded to the Superintendent of Education by October 1st each year.

5.3 Parental Responsibilities

- 5.3.1 It is the responsibility of the parent to determine whether or not it is safe for a student to leave for school at any time, particularly when severe weather conditions prevail.
- 5.3.2 It is the responsibility of the parent to get the student to and from the school bus stop.
- 5.3.3 It is the responsibility of the parent, with special attention to kindergarten children, to ensure that the student is safely on the school bus during severe weather conditions. It is also the parent's responsibility to ensure that a responsible person is waiting to receive the student at the school bus stop when classes are cancelled due to plant breakdown, inclement or severe weather conditions.

5.3.4 If school buses are cancelled, the parent who transports a student to school is responsible for transporting the student home after school.

References

Education Act

North East Tri-Board Student Transportation Policy OP01: Policy and Procedures for Cancellation of School Bus Transportation due to Inclement Weather