

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Belief

The Division is responsible for ensuring that each of its students is provided with an education. Therefore, schools shall remain open to students during the times and dates established by the Board.

Guidelines

1. School bus services may be suspended due to adverse road or weather conditions that jeopardize the safety of students, however, schools will remain open.
2. School bus route suspension will not always be made on a system-wide basis due to the large geographic area of the Division.
3. Parents are not required to send their children to school if, in their judgment, weather or road conditions are detrimental to the safety, or well being of their children.
4. Parents who have brought their children to school on days when school bus services are suspended will be responsible for picking up their children.
5. Any of the following factors, or combinations of factors, shall serve as guidelines for considering the suspension of school bus services :
 - 5.1. Temperature of -40 degrees Celsius or a wind chill factor of -50 degrees Celsius reported by the weather office for the area in question;
 - 5.2. Visibility of less than 30 meters;
 - 5.3. Road closures by the R.C.M.P, municipal or other local road officials.
6. When school bus services are suspended, schools shall remain open to students. All staff members are expected to report to work. On scheduled Diploma Examination dates, students who arrive at school shall write the examination.

Procedures

7. The decision to suspend bus routes will be determined at 6:00 a.m. by the school bus drivers in consultation with the Director of Transportation/Designate.
8. The Director of Transportation/Designate shall notify school principals via a fan out system regarding the suspension of school bus services.
9. Once a decision is made to suspend a bus route or all bus routes due to road or weather conditions, the Director of Transportation shall notify local radio stations. Families have a responsibility to listen for bus suspension announcements when inclement weather conditions exist. Media outlets, however, are not obligated to

broadcast this information as they do so as a community service. Bus route suspensions will also be posted on the website at www.wrps.ab.ca by 7:00 a.m.

10. A driver may make the decision to suspend school bus service to students during inclement weather. A driver who decides to suspend school bus service to students due to weather or road conditions shall contact the Director of Transportation no later than 6:00 a.m., and shall make every reasonable effort to contact all parents of students transported on his/her route.
11. A driver may make the decision to operate their bus early due to weather or road conditions. The driver shall contact the Director of Transportation and the school principal. The principal shall make every reasonable effort to contact all parents of students transported on that route. Schools shall remain open to students whose parents or older siblings cannot be contacted, until such time as alternate housing or transportation arrangements can be made.
12. If the driver encounters impassible roads and is not able to complete the route, he/she shall immediately:
 - 12.1. Advise the Director of Transportation, who will immediately call the school.
 - 12.2. The school will make every effort to notify the parents of the students on that route; and
 - 12.3. The operator shall deliver those students on the bus back to their residence and advise the Director of Transportation of the safe return of those students.
13. A check-in process will be utilized during periods of inclement weather to monitor the completion of each bus route and initiate follow-up action if a bus is overdue.
14. Normally busses will not run early if inclement weather conditions develop during the day. Students will remain at the school until the end of the day, unless picked up by their parents.
 - 14.1. If the Director of Transportation decides to run all busses early, the Director will contact all operators to begin their routes early and notify the local media;
 - 14.2. The Director of Transportation shall notify principals who will make every effort to contact the parents regarding early bus delivery of students;
 - 14.3. Bus operators shall ensure that students have accessed their residence prior to continuing on their route; and
 - 14.4. Schools shall remain open to students whose parents or older siblings are not home, until such time as alternate housing arrangement can be made.
15. For the safety of students it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure:
 - 15.1 That their children are suitably dressed for coping with weather conditions.
 - 15.2 Arrangements have been made for alternate shelter for their child(ren) if no one is home