

**School Closure, School Delay or Bus Delay**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Transportation</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>School Closure, School Delay or Bus Delay</b>		
<b>Adopted</b>		<b>Revised</b>	<b>March 2021</b>
<b>Policies Used / Referenced</b>			

**Policy Statement**

It may be necessary to close all schools, close schools by Centre, or have a bus delay to ensure that students are not endangered by poor weather or road conditions, or loss of essential services, hydro, or property damage.

Individual bus drivers have a responsibility to communicate with their Assistant Manager a delay for their individual bus run. If a driver feels a part of their run is not safe, they must report this to their Assistant Manager, should they encounter a particular safety concern.

The final responsibility for determining whether or not students attend classes on days when hazardous weather conditions exist (e.g. extreme wind chill, snow, ice) and schools remain open rests with the parents/guardians. Students arriving late under these conditions shall not be penalized.

**Procedures**

**1. District Office and Education Centres:**

- a. The Transportation Manager shall monitor weather forecasts and conditions during the school year.
- b. The Transportation Manager and Assistant Managers shall obtain adequate information regarding weather and road conditions to determine if conditions would endanger the operation of school buses.
- c. The Transportation Manager shall contact the Superintendent and/or Director of Finance and Administration who shall consider the available data and the Superintendent will make an appropriate decision regarding the closure of schools.
- d. The Facilities Manager, and/or Assistant Facilities Managers, when made aware of the loss of essential services or property damage, shall obtain adequate information regarding the feasibility of opening school for the day.
- e. The Facilities Manager shall contact the Superintendent and/or designate and Administration who shall consider the available data and make an appropriate decision regarding the closure of schools.

**School Closure, School Delay or Bus Delay**

- f. The Transportation Manager or designate shall alert media, update the website and Twitter. A message is placed on the District toll-free telephone line when schools are closed or when there is a bus delay.
- g. The Assistant Transportation Manager shall ensure that the bus drivers have a list of the home and alternate sites of the students they are transporting.
- h. The Transportation Manager and Assistants shall monitor transportation office telephone lines, cell phones and radios until all until all bus drivers have completed their bus runs.

**2. Schools**

- a. At the beginning of the school year, Principals of elementary and middle schools shall:
  - i. Remind parents/guardians to dress students warmly and appropriately for the weather.
  - ii. Remind parents/guardians to designate an alternate site near home in the event that a student is dismissed from school early, and to advise the school if there is a change of address for an alternate site.
  - iii. Ensure that all teachers of students from kindergarten to grade five have a list of telephone numbers of the homes and alternate sites of students.
  - iv. Develop a plan for contacting parents/guardians or caregivers by telephone/School Messenger in the case of early closure of schools.
- b. All teachers of students from kindergarten to grade five, or designate, staff shall make every effort to contact parent/guardian or caregivers at the alternate sites by telephone regarding early dismissal.
- c. All teachers of students from kindergarten to grade 5 shall remind students of their alternate sites.
- d. The Principal and all school personnel shall remain at the school until all of their students have left for home.
- e. The Principal or designate shall assign school personnel to remain at school an appropriate length of time after students have departed in case a student cannot find shelter and returns to the school.
- f. The Principal or designate shall assign a staff member to monitor the telephone for an appropriate length of time following the dismissal of the students and the completion of bus runs.

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**Wind Chill Hazards:**

Principals and teachers should check the wind chill on cold days. Even moderate wind chills can be dangerous over a period of time. Environment Canada states that wind chill below -25° Celsius presents a risk of frostbite.

Temperature (°Celsius)										
Wind Speed (km/h)	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45
10	-3	-9	-15	-21	-27	-33	-39	-45	-51	-57
20	-5	-12	-18	-24	-30	-37	-43	-49	-56	-62
30	-6	-13	-20	-26	-33	-39	-45	-52	-59	-65
40	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-54	-61	-68
50	-8	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-49	-56	-63	-69
60	-9	-16	-23	-30	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71

Source: Environment Canada

School personnel should monitor students for frostbite and adjust the recess time outside according to the weather in their area. Generally, temperatures below -20°C (Wind Chill) would warrant staying inside. It is important to note that some play areas are sheltered, while others are not protected from the wind.

**Reference**

- Education Act