

BUS SERVICE CANCELLATION – INCLEMENT WEATHER

Background

The transportation of students to school is a responsibility shared by parents and the Division both recognizing that the health, the safety and the welfare of the students is of the ultimate importance.

The Division recognizes that from time to time, severe weather conditions or poor road conditions may negatively impact on student safety and occasionally bus transportation may have to be cancelled. Further, given the large geographic area encompassed by the Division, it is recognized that the severity of weather or road conditions can vary from one region to the next.

As a result, the Division understands that severe weather can result in bus schedules being changed or routes cancelled to respond to severe conditions and that those decisions must be able to respond to local variations in conditions. The Division also understands that parents may choose to keep students off the bus or drive them to school regardless of the status of bus service.

Parents are responsible to exercise additional diligence on days of extreme conditions and are to be certain of bus status before sending students to designated bus pickups. Parents are advised to check public information sources and the Division's website for information on bus status.

Procedures

1. Principals will ensure that billet information is supplied for each of its students that live outside of the urban centre where the school is located.
2. Principals will develop procedures to contact billets and/or ensure student safety in the event of route cancellations after students are at school.
3. The Manager of Transportation and Fleet Services will ensure that a plan for bus transportation of students to billets is developed for schools where applicable.
4. Factors that impact the decision for a cancellation of bus service include, but are not limited to:
 - 1.1 Severe cold (-40°C ambient temperature or -45°C or greater wind chill).
 - 1.2 Consideration of the weather forecast for the day.
 - 1.3 Severely limited visibility, blizzard or "white out conditions".
 - 1.4 Unsafe or extremely adverse road conditions.

No single factor automatically requires the cancellation of routes.

(Conditions reported on www.theweathernetwork.com at 6:00 a.m. will be the criteria used throughout the Division)

5. When the decision to cancel routes is made, the Manager or designate shall:
 - 5.1 Inform the Director, School Superintendents and the Superintendent of Division Services/Chief Financial Officer.
 - 5.2 Provide information on the cancellation to local radio stations and schools.
 - 5.3 Post the information on the Division website.
6. If a bus route is cancelled before students have been picked up in the morning due to severe weather conditions the route is cancelled for the day.
7. If the decision to cancel is made after students are in school, students transported to school by bus shall be required to stay at school until they are taken home or to billets by bus, if available, or other appropriate arrangements for their care have been made.
8. Students can load the bus to be taken to billets only after the school has contacted billets and confirmed that a responsible adult will be at the billet's home to receive the students.
9. Authority to cancel bus routes is delegated as described in this procedure.
10. Urban Only Bus Routes
 - 10.1 Urban bussing will normally occur even if rural pickups are cancelled.
 - 10.2 The Manager may cancel urban only bus routes. When the Manager makes a decision to cancel urban routes in an urban centre, all urban routes in that urban centre are cancelled.
 - 10.3 During severe weather conditions, children are to be accompanied to the bus stop or have very clear instructions on what to do if the bus does not arrive. Children are never to be left at the stop without an alternative arrangement in the event of an emergency.
 - 10.4 The Manager's decision to cancel urban routes will, where possible, be made in cooperation with the Transportation department of other Divisions in the same urban centre.
 - 10.5 When the Manager makes a decision to cancel urban routes, the Manager or designate shall inform the affected bus drivers and schools.
 - 10.6 Principals may arrange for additional communication with parents in the case of Urban Route Cancellation.

11. Rural Bus Routes

- 11.1 A driver may cancel his/her bus route according to the criteria in this procedure and guidance from the Manager. When a driver makes a decision to cancel the driver's bus route, the driver will, one half hour ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour) prior to first pick up, contact the parent or guardian of each child who would ordinarily ride on the bus, the principals of school(s) affected by the cancellation and the Manager or designate.
- 11.2 The Manager may cancel any one route, combination of routes or all routes. The Manager will notify affected drivers of the cancellation.

Reference: Sections 85, 87, 109, 110, 175 Education Act