



INCLEMENT WEATHER

Background

The health and safety of students is a paramount consideration in the organization of outdoor activities.

Weather conditions may result in changes to outdoor activities, school closures, early dismissals, and adjustments in regular bus schedules.

Adverse weather conditions occasionally result in the need to adjust school and bus operating schedules in the interest of student and staff safety.

Procedures

1. Staff making decisions regarding outdoor activities need to take into consideration inclement weather that may result from the following conditions or combinations of conditions:
 - 1.1 Continuous rain.
 - 1.2 Extreme wind.
 - 1.3 Extreme cold.
 - 1.4 Air Quality
 - 1.5 Other severe conditions.
2. The suggested guideline is that students do not go outside if the temperature is -20°C or colder, or if the temperature and wind chill factor are -20°C or colder. Adherence to the suggested guideline is at the discretion of school administrators and staff as they determine whether recess will be indoors or outdoors.
3. Air quality is to be monitored similar to extreme cold temperatures. The suggested guideline is that students do not go outside when air quality reaches an index of 7 or more. Principals are to carefully monitor the air quality in their area when the index reaches levels of 4-6 which indicate a moderate risk. Environment Canada's Air Quality Health Index for the province of Alberta is available at https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/provincial_summary/ab_e.html.
4. The principal shall ensure the school's specific inclement weather protocols and procedures are periodically communicated to parents through the school's communication networks.
5. The superintendent or bus operator may suspend school bus service and/or close schools in the system when weather conditions constitute a hazard to the safety of students and staff.



6. The principal(s) will ensure that parents/guardians and bus operators are regularly advised of the procedures used when the suspension of bus services, early dismissal, or school closure is necessary.
7. The superintendent or designate will consider the advice of the bus operators for each school when making a decision regarding the suspension of school bus service as a result of weather or road conditions.
8. The superintendent or designate shall make a decision regarding school bus service suspension before 6:00 a.m. when possible, or the previous night if conditions necessitate the suspension of bus service the following day.
9. When weather or road conditions deteriorate during the school day and may require early return of bus students to their homes,
 - 9.1 The superintendent/designate, in consultation with all bus operators, will decide how to proceed; and
 - 9.2 Social media platforms and/or Division/School websites shall be used to notify communities promptly of decisions regarding early return of bus students
10. The principal and staff will make every reasonable effort to ensure that both bus and non-bus students can arrive home safely when they are dismissed earlier than the regular school closing time.
11. Administration and teaching staff are required to maintain regular working hours in the school for the purpose of receiving students, communicating with parents, and other related activities.
 - 11.1 All staff are encouraged to ensure that they are prepared for winter driving conditions (see this [link for more information](#)).
 - 11.2 If staff are not comfortable driving to work due to weather conditions, they may access other entitlements, such as a personal day.
 - 11.3 In the event of a road closure by the RCMP, the Superintendent may authorize those affected staff members not to report to work, to postpone their journey to work or to work online.
12. Teaching and learning opportunities during transportation cancellation may vary depending on the number of students in attendance, and this may differ from class to class or grade to grade within schools across the Division. Teachers shall exercise their professional judgement in making the decision to present new material when transportation services to the school are cancelled. If new material is presented, teachers shall make provision for students to attain the objectives of the material missed during their absence.



13. In the event of bus cancellation due to inclement weather, all extra-curricular activities such as practices, field trips, sporting events will be postponed or canceled. If weather conditions improve throughout the day, extra-curricular activities may resume with approval from the Superintendent or designate.
14. Parents/guardians are responsible to decide, in extreme weather conditions, whether or not to send a child to school.
15. Early Dismissal
 - 15.1 The bus operator is responsible for contacting the superintendent or designate and the principal(s) of the school(s) concerned to advise of adverse road conditions which may require early dismissal.
 - 15.2 The Superintendent or designate will decide whether to have buses pick up students early.
 - 15.3 The principal(s) will communicate directly with the bus operator(s) to make arrangements that may be required to transport students home early.
 - 15.4 The superintendent or designate will arrange for an announcement to be made over designated social media platforms and the Division website when early dismissal is deemed necessary.
16. Decision Made Before School Opening
 - 16.1 The bus operator is responsible for advising the Superintendent regarding pending adverse road and/or weather conditions.
 - 16.2 The superintendent will render a decision on school closure or suspension of bus service as per the preceding procedures.
 - 16.3 The superintendent will make an official announcement with regard to school closure or suspension of bus service through designated social media platforms and the Division website.
 - 16.4 The superintendent will inform principal(s) regarding decisions about school closure.

Reference: Section 18, 19, 33, 51, 52, 53, 60, 205, 222 Education Act
Employment Standards Act