

## **BUSING DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER**

### **Background**

The Superintendent has the authority to temporarily close schools in emergent situations where the health or safety of students and staff may be endangered. The primary consideration in the event of severe weather conditions shall be the health and safety of students. Due to the large geographical area covered by the Division, school closures and bus run cancellations will not always be made on a system-wide basis.

### **Procedures**

1. In recognition of the vast weather and topography variance that exists within the Livingstone Range School Division, the driver of each bus is responsible for making the final decision on whether or not to operate on any day when student safety may be in jeopardy or decide not to stop at a particular pick-up site if they feel the weather/road conditions warrant such action.
2. The bus driver may consult with one or more parents on their bus route to check on weather conditions before making a final decision on a bus route.
3. Any of the following factors, or combinations of them, shall serve as guidelines for considering the non-operation of buses:
  - a) local temperatures, including wind chill, that are colder than -40C;
  - b) severely reduced visibility (.2 km or less);
  - c) a combination of wind, weather and/or road conditions that make bus operations unsafe.
  - d) Road closures by R.C.M.P, municipal or other local road officials.
4. When the decision has been made not to operate an individual bus route, the bus driver shall notify the Coordinator of Transportation and parents on that route. The Coordinator of Transportation shall notify the Principal(s) of the school(s) having students on that bus route.
5. Shut Down of All or Part of the Division Schools and or its Transportation System

If adverse weather conditions prevail, the decision by the Superintendent or designate may be taken to close down all or parts of the Division schools and/or transportation system.

  - a) Schools will remain open as long as students are present and/or staff are able to get to the school. Staff are expected to make reasonable efforts to be in attendance at school during normal working hours. Should the weather improve or roads become passable, they are expected to put forth the same reasonable effort and journey to school. Staff are expected to have a learning plan in place for days when school is open but they may not be in attendance for part or all of the day due to weather or impassable roads.

- b) Utilizing a fan-out communication system, the Superintendent's office will notify all Principals regarding school closures.
  - c) The Coordinator of Transportation will notify the media and all bus drivers regarding school closures. The bus drivers will inform the parents on their route that buses are not running and that schools are closed. Schools affected will also communicate that the school is closed utilizing the automated communication system and any social media platform which they have identified.
  - d) The Coordinator of Transportation will update the LRSD website as soon as practically possible [www.lrsd.ca](http://www.lrsd.ca), to communicate when school busses are not running.
6. A decision to close schools for the day due to inclement weather shall be made by the Superintendent as early as practically possible.
  7. When conditions are such that a decision has been made to cancel buses and/or to close schools in a service area, or in the entire school jurisdiction, notification will be provided through division and school websites, social media and other media outlets as necessary. Local radio stations shall be contacted as early as possible by the Coordinator of Transportation to give public warning that the buses will not be operating.
  10. When a bus route or bus routes are shut down in the morning, they will not operate for the remainder of the day. When buses do not run, and parents/guardians choose to deliver the child to school, the parent shall also be responsible for ensuring safe transportation home for the student.
  11. Once students are at school, drivers are encouraged to leave them there until the end of the school day. However, the bus driver may determine the need to make an earlier return run. The decision to take students home early should be made in consultation with parents, the Principal, and the immediate supervisor or the Coordinator of Transportation.
  12. When a decision has been made not to operate an afternoon bus route and to leave the students at school, all concerned individuals including parents, Principals, the immediate bus supervisor and the Coordinator of Transportation shall be informed.
  13. Each Principal must have a contingency plan in place to accommodate students overnight, if weather conditions are such that students cannot return home. The student billet fields contained in the SIS System may be useful to administrators in developing a database for student billeting.
  14. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) is/are properly clothed for the weather conditions. Parents are expected to exercise good judgment and care when deciding whether or not to send their child(ren) to school when weather conditions are extreme.

---

December 2003

Updates: January 2005; July 2008; July 2010; August 2012; June 2013 (Reviewed); December 2017; September 2018; Jan. 2020

#### References

33, 52, 53, 59, 196, 197, 222 Education Act