

	Lloydminster Catholic School Division – Administrative Procedures	
	AP 132 – Inclement Weather	
Related LCSDF AP's	AP 260 – Student Travel AP 552 – Use of Passenger Van	
Form(s)		
References:	<i>The Education Act, 1995</i> sections 85, 87, 175	
Received by the Board: August, 2021		Update: August, 2021

Background

The Division believes that schools shall remain open during inclement weather; however, the Division also recognizes that weather conditions may result in the interruption of instruction; the dismissal of students at any time during the day; and/or the adjustment to regular bus schedules.

Procedures

A. School Operations During Inclement Weather

1. All Lloydminster Catholic School Division schools will remain open during inclement weather.
2. Weather and road conditions will be assessed using the following information sources:
 - 2.1. Weather - Environment Canada - https://weather.gc.ca/canada_e.html
 - 2.2. Saskatchewan Road Conditions – <https://hotline.gov.sk.ca/map.html>
 - 2.3. Alberta Road Conditions – 511 Alberta - <https://511.alberta.ca/#:Alerts>
3. The Principal will ensure the supervision process, practices, and procedures are considered during the colder months. Recommended guidelines for outside or inside play during elementary recess include:
 - 3.1. When the weather is reasonable, students are expected to play outdoors during recess and noon breaks requiring clothing appropriate for the weather conditions. Appropriate clothing in winter includes mittens/gloves, ski pants, warm boots, head protection (e.g. toque), and a warm jacket.
 - 3.2. When the actual temperature is below -25°C, the Principal may declare an indoor recess.
 - 3.3. When the weather is between -25°C and -28°C (actual or wind chill) students may stay inside for part of the lunch hour and go outside for part of the noon hour (no more than 15 minutes).
 - 3.4. When weather conditions reach -28°C or colder on the wind chill scale, the Principal will declare an inside day for students where students will be requested to remain indoors.

4. The Principal, or designate, is responsible for annually informing parents regarding the Division's procedures and expectations when there is a suspension of bus services or when there is a need to dismiss students early.
5. The Principal, or designate, is responsible for informing parents regarding the cancellation of extra-curricular event bussing during inclement weather.
6. Parents shall ensure their children, who are passengers on a school bus, are properly dressed in accordance with prevailing or potential weather conditions.
7. In extreme weather conditions, the final decision to send a child to school or to the bus rests with the parents even though buses and schools may be operating.
Note: It should be noted that the student's absence will be recorded as unexcused when buses and schools are operating.
8. The Director or Chief Financial Officer shall direct a Division-wide suspension of school bus service in every instance where, in his/her opinion, weather and/or road conditions constitute a significant hazard to the safety and well-being of students and staff.
9. A school bus operator shall not operate the school bus at the start of a school day or throughout the day if, in his/her opinion, road or climatic conditions in his/her area of service are of a nature that would make the operation of the school bus hazardous to the safety and well-being of the school bus passengers.
 - 9.1. Whenever a school bus operator decides, at the beginning of a school day, that he/she will not operate the school bus, he/she shall immediately notify the Transportation Supervisor, the Principal of each school to which he/she provides service, and the parents of each child on the route of his/her decision.
 - 9.2. Whenever a school bus operator determines that hazardous road or climatic conditions may arise during the course of a school day, he/she shall contact the Chief Financial Officer or designate and request the release of students who ride on the bus. The Principal shall release such students when requested by the Chief Financial Officer or designate. The Principal of the school may call the Chief Financial Officer or designate and request the bus contractor be contacted to release students due to hazardous conditions.
 - 9.3. A school bus operator may determine during the course of the route that road or climatic conditions make it unsafe to continue on the route. In this circumstance, the school bus operator shall attempt to park the bus in a safe location off the traveled road allowance. The school bus operator shall immediately attempt to establish radio contact with the Transportation Supervisor who will then contact relevant school authorities so that parents can be informed of the circumstances and location of their children.

10. Should a bus breakdown occur in the morning, the bus operator shall contact the Transportation Supervisor or designate as soon as possible so that the message can be relayed to schools and parents.
11. The Transportation Supervisor or designate will contact school administrators informing them of any cancellation.
12. The Principal is responsible for ensuring school staff are available at the school during school closures to answer the phones and to provide reasonable measures for students to return home safely.
13. After receiving notification from the Transportation Supervisor, the Division Communications Coordinator will contact the local radio and television stations for public announcements regarding the cancellation of busing operations and school closures. In each instance, these announcements will be made the preceding evening or before 6:30 a.m. on the same day that bus services are to be suspended. Announcements of any cancellations will be broadcast on the following radio stations:
 - CKSA – Lloydminster FM 95.9
 - CKLM – The Goat FM 106.9

Note: It is recommended that two or more broadcasts be heard to ensure accuracy.

14. Each September, the Principal shall communicate the need for parents to confirm their personal arrangements for child care provisions for their child(ren) in the event that bus route service is interrupted due to severe weather or mechanical difficulties which may necessitate:
 - 14.1. The suspension of regular bus service;
 - 14.2. The dismissal of students earlier than the regularly scheduled time; or
 - 14.3. Informing parents due to a bus being more than ten (10) minutes late for a scheduled stop.
15. All personnel are expected to be in school during inclement weather. Staff members are asked to listen to local radio broadcasts for precise weather and road condition information. Staff members may apply for leave under the terms and conditions outlined in the LINC agreement if they determine it is unsafe to travel to school during inclement weather.

B. Suspension of Daily Bus Route Services due to Inclement Weather

1. School bus service may also be suspended or delayed by the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Transportation Supervisor, when Environment Canada reports or forecasts an air temperature of -45c degrees, including windchill factor.

2. School bus service may also be suspended or delayed by the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Transportation Supervisor, due to adverse weather or road conditions.
3. Transportation Supervisor shall take into account current weather information provided by Environment Canada when making a recommendation to the Chief Financial Officer regarding the suspension of school bus service.
4. Suspension of school bus service may be determined for:
 - 4.1. All school routes for all schools.
 - 4.2. A specific school within the school division.
 - 4.3. A route-by-route basis.
5. The Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Transportation Supervisor, shall make a decision regarding school bus suspension by 5:00 p.m. the previous night if conditions make it obvious that service will be suspended the following day.
6. If busses are suspended in the a.m. they will not run in the p.m.
7. When regular school bus service is suspended by the Chief Financial Officer, all schools will be notified that all field and athletic trips shall also be cancelled.
8. When weather or road conditions deteriorate during the day, the Transportation Supervisor may authorize individual or all buses to leave school prior to regular dismissal time.
9. The Principal, staff and school bus operators shall take steps to ensure students arrive home safely when they are dismissed earlier than normal. This includes attempts to contact parents, guardians and emergency contacts to ensure students have adequate access to residences.
10. All daily route school bus drivers are to hold themselves in readiness for service on short notice during cases of pending extreme conditions.

C. Parent Communication for Suspended Bus Route Services

1. The Transportation Supervisor shall contact all principals and the Division Communications Coordinator to announce any suspension of bus services.
2. The Transportation Supervisor shall update the bus status notice on “School Bus Update” section on the school division website.

3. The Division Communications Coordinator shall advise the media of the suspension of bus route services.

D. Transportation Services for Extracurricular Activities and Field Trips

1. Transportation services include may include the use of Lloydminster Catholic School Division school buses and vans, and employee and parent drivers of personal vehicles where they have been designated and authorized to transport students.
2. The decision to cancel or suspend transportation services to destinations for extracurricular activities and field trips will be made by the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with Transportation Supervisor and principal. Weather information including Environment Canada Weather Services, Highway Hotline, etc. will be considered regarding specific weather and highway/road warnings (i.e., blizzard, freezing rain, wind chill, winter storm, etc.). All variables such as highway, time of travel (both leaving and returning), mode of transportation, and cell coverage will also be taken into consideration for the decision to cancel or suspend transportation.
3. During months of inclement weather risk, the parent (guardian), and teacher will ensure all students have extra warm clothing available in the vehicle.
4. Lloydminster Catholic Schools will cover the additional hotel cost incurred due to the decision to suspend transportation services for a return trip to Lloydminster due to inclement weather. All food costs will be the responsibility of the individual.
5. If transportation services are suspended and a group of students are required to stay an extra night, the Principal, in consultation with the teacher and Transportation Supervisor will reassess the risk and take appropriate safety precautions the following day.
6. A backup driver will be identified and arranged by the Transportation Supervisor in the event of an unforeseen circumstance (i.e. mechanical breakdown, ill driver, etc.) requires a change in bus or bus driver.