

AP 132 – INCLEMENT WEATHER

Background

The Division believes that, normally, schools should remain open during inclement weather; however, it recognizes that weather conditions may result in school closures, early dismissals and/or adjustments to regular bus schedules.

Procedures

1. All Lloydminster Catholic School Division schools will remain open during inclement weather.
 - 1.1. Fresh air and exercise are necessary for a healthy body. Our five elementary school principals will ensure that current weather temperature is part of the supervision process in the colder months.
 - 1.2. Recommended guidelines for elementary recess include:
 - 1.2.1. When the weather is reasonable students are expected to play outdoors during recess and noon breaks and should be dressed accordingly. (Appropriate clothing in winter includes mittens/gloves, ski pants, warm boots and a toque with a warm jacket.)
 - 1.2.2. When the actual temperature is below -25°C, schools may declare an indoor recess.
 - 1.2.3. When weather conditions reach -28°C or colder on the wind chill scale, an inside day for students may be declared at which time students will be requested to remain indoors.
 - 1.2.4. When the weather is between -25°C and -28°C (actual or wind chill) the students may stay inside for part of the lunch hour and go outside for part of the noon hour (no more than 15 minutes).
2. The Principal / designate is responsible for annually advising parents of the procedures used when the suspension of bus services, early dismissal or school closure is necessary.
3. The Principal / designate is responsible for informing parents using Facebook, Twitter, website and/or telephone contact regarding the cancellation of extra-curricular event bussing during inclement weather.
4. Parents shall ensure their children, who are passengers on a school bus, are properly dressed in accordance with prevailing or potential weather conditions.
5. 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.

6. 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.
7. 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.
 - 7.1. 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 Coordinator, the Principal of each school to which he/she provides service, and the parents of each child on the route of his/her decision.
 - 7.2. 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.
 - 7.3. 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 Coordinator who will then contact relevant school authorities so that parents can be informed of the circumstances and location of their children.
8. Should a bus breakdown occur in the morning, the bus operator shall contact the Transportation Coordinator or designate as soon as possible so that the message can be relayed to the schools.
9. The Transportation Coordinator or designate will contact school administrators informing them of any cancellation.
10. 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.
11. The Transportation Coordinator will contact the local radio and television stations for 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.

12. It shall be communicated to the parents that it is very important that they make adequate provisions for their child(ren) in advance in the event that weather or mechanical difficulties arise causing:
 - 12.1. Suspension of regular bus service.
 - 12.2. Early dismissal of students.
 - 12.3. A bus being more than ten (10) minutes late for a scheduled stop.

13. 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.

14. Transportation Services outside of Lloydminster
 - 14.1. Transportation services include Lloydminster Catholic School Division school buses and parent drivers of personal vehicles where they have been designated and authorized to transport students.
 - 14.2. The decision to cancel or suspend transportation services will be made by the principal, in consultation with the teacher and Transportation Coordinator. Weather information including Environment Canada Weather Services, Highway Hotline, etc. will be considered regarding specific weather 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.
 - 14.3. During months of inclement weather risk, the teacher / supervisor will ensure all students have extra warm clothing available in the vehicle.
 - 14.4. 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.
 - 14.5. 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 Coordinator will reassess the risk and take appropriate safety precautions the following day.

- 14.6. A backup driver will be identified and arranged by the Transportation Coordinator in the event of an unforeseen circumstance (i.e. mechanical breakdown, ill driver, etc.).

Reference: Sections 85, 87, 108, 109, 110, 116, 175 Education Act