

Administrative Procedure 132

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Background

The Division takes precautions with respect to the welfare of students and staff coming to or going from school. When road or weather conditions jeopardize the safety of students and staff, schools shall be closed and/or bus runs canceled. However, school closures and bus run cancellations shall not always be made on a system-wide basis due to the large geographical area covered by the Division.

Procedures

Bus Cancellations

1. Any of the following factors, or combinations of factors, shall serve as guidelines for considering the suspension of bus services:
 - 1.1 Road closures by the R.C.M.P, municipal or other local road officials. AMA Road Reports will be used to review covered and closed roads.
 - 1.2 Temperature of -40 degrees celsius with or without a wind chill factor as reported by The Weather Network for the areas in question.
 - 1.3 Visibility of less than 300 meters travel is not recommended;
2. The decision to cancel bus runs is made by the Director of Transportation. This decision will be made as early as possible, typically prior to 7:00 am, but may be made earlier if clear and compelling information is available from The Weather Network or other credible sources.
 - 2.1 Bus drivers have the individual authority to cancel their route (after consultation with the Director of Transportation), or decide not to stop at a particular pick-up site if they feel the weather/road conditions warrant such action.
 - 2.2 In the event a bus driver decides not to run their route or stop at a particular pick-up site, they will contact the Director of Transportation. The School Bus Driver will then contact parents on the route and inform them of the decision.
 - 2.3 Once a decision is made to suspend a/all bus route(s) due to road or weather conditions, the Director of Transportation shall post the suspension notice on the [Bus Status App](#) by 7:00 a.m. If possible, WRPS social media accounts will be updated; however, all families and staff are encouraged to use the [Bus Status App](#).
3. When buses are canceled and schools remain open, teachers and support staff are expected to make reasonable efforts to be in attendance at the school during normal working hours as per their respective [collective agreement](#) or [support staff terms of employment](#).

4. A bus route suspended in the morning is also suspended in the afternoon, regardless of improved weather or road conditions.
5. In the event a school has scheduled a curricular or extracurricular field trip, including an athletic event using a bus on days when all buses have been canceled, the Principal may allow the activity to continue using parent and staff volunteers if parent and staff volunteers have met the requirements of [AP557 - Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles](#).
6. Normally buses will not run early if inclement weather conditions develop during the day. Students will remain at the school until the end of the day, unless picked up by their parents.
 - 6.1 If the Director of Transportation decides to run all busses early, the Director will contact all operators to begin their routes early;
 - 6.2 The Director of Transportation shall notify principals who will make every effort to contact the parents regarding early bus delivery of students;
 - 6.3 Bus operators shall ensure that students have accessed their residence prior to continuing on their route; and
 - 6.4 Schools shall remain open to students whose parents or older siblings are not home, until such time as alternate housing arrangements can be made.
7. If a driver encounters impassable roads and is not able to complete the route, he/she shall immediately:
 - 7.1 Advise the Director of Transportation, who will immediately call the school.
 - 7.2 The school will make every effort to notify the parents of the students on that route; and
 - 7.3 The driver shall deliver those students on the bus back to their residence and advise the Director of Transportation of the safe return of those students.
8. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure:
 - 8.1 That their children are suitably dressed for coping with weather conditions.
 - 8.2 Arrangements have been made for alternate shelter for their child(ren) if no one is home

School Closure

9. The decision to close schools is made by the Superintendent or Designate after appropriate information is gathered from each of the school areas.
 - 9.1 Once a decision is made to close schools due to road or weather conditions, a school closure notice will be posted on the Division website at www.wrps11.ca and WRPS social media accounts by 7:00 a.m.

Reference: [Education Act](#)
[Employment Standards Act](#)
[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)
[AP 557 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles](#)
[ATA - Wetaskiwin School Division Collective Agreement](#)
[WRPS Support Staff Terms of Employment](#)