



## **School Closure Procedures/School Transportation Policy**

Effective Date: December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

### **1. PURPOSE**

To establish administrative procedures for the South Shore Regional Centre for Education (SSRCE) to effectively communicate the procedures when a school(s) or facility must be closed due to Inclement Weather or Unfit for Occupancy reasons.

### **2. INTRODUCTION**

The SSRCE believes that communication between SSRCE and its partners (students, parents, teachers, administrators, other school staff, community members, SSRCE regional staff) is important, especially when considering the safety of students and staff. From time to time, it may be necessary to cancel school or close early, especially due to inclement weather or safety conditions within the building(s). These procedures outline the process followed when making these decisions.

### **3. PROCEDURES**

3.1. SSRCE believe that protecting teaching and learning time is critical; however, there are times when decisions regarding closing schools for the day or closing early are necessary to the safety and wellbeing of students and staff.

3.2. There are two reasons why schools may need to be closed: inclement weather and/or the building is unfit for occupancy.

#### **3.3. *SCHOOL CLOSURE DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER:***

3.3.1. The Transportation Coordinator monitors weather conditions each evening for potential storms or changes to road conditions.

3.3.2. On days when extreme weather or poor driving conditions are forecast, the Transportation Coordinator may consult with a number of resources throughout the geographic area, including the Department of Public Works, Environment Canada, school bus drivers, WOOD weather service and others in the community whose employment causes them to be on the roads before buses run.

3.3.3. Whenever possible, the decision to keep buses off the highways and, therefore, cancel school shall be made so announcements can be broadcast by 6:00 a.m. The Regional Executive Director of Schools in consultation with the Director of Operations and Coordinator of Transportation shall make this decision.

3.3.4. The Director of Operations shall notify the Coordinator of Communications who will notify the media by email of any school cancellations.

3.3.5. School cancellation information shall also be placed on the SSRCE's Website and Social Media Outlets and parents will be notified by SchoolMessenger Alerts by the Coordinator of Communications.

3.3.6. Isolated conditions may cause the closure of individual school(s).

#### **3.4. *DISMISSAL OF SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY***

3.4.1 Student safety shall be the determining factor in deciding whether students should be dismissed during the day because of weather conditions.



- 3.4.2 Each school shall develop a telephone tree, which includes the parent/guardian and one alternate contact for students in Grades Primary to Three. Schools may wish to develop a telephone tree for students in Grades Four to Six.
- 3.4.3 Parents/Guardians of students in Grades Primary to Grade Three are encouraged to provide their child's homeroom teacher with written instructions as to where their child should go if a member of the telephone tree is unable to contact them.
- 3.4.4 Parents/Guardians are to make their own arrangements for child care in the event an early dismissal is necessary.
- 3.4.5 The Director of Operations shall notify the Coordinator of Communications who will notify the media by email of any school cancellations.
- 3.4.6 School cancellation information shall also be placed on the SSRCE's Website and Social Media Outlets and parents will be notified by SchoolMessenger Alerts by the Coordinator of Communications.

### ***3.5 CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL DUE TO PHYSICAL PLANT IMPAIRMENT***

- 3.5.1 The Principal shall advise the Director of Operations of the need to cancel school for the day or dismiss students early because of a malfunction of the physical plant. i.e. power failure, heating issue, flooding, etc.
- 3.5.2 The decision to cancel for the day or close early rests with the Director of Operations, after consultation with the Regional Executive Director.

## **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

It shall be the responsibility of the Regional Executive Director or their designate to ensure these administrative procedures are followed.

## **5. COMMUNICATION AND DISTRIBUTION**

- 5.1 The Director of Programs and Student Services or designate will be responsible for informing administrators about this procedure. The administrators will be responsible for communicating the procedures to their school community.
- 5.2 The Coordinator of Communication will be responsible for posting these procedures and making any updates to the online version as changes are made.

## **6. Monitoring**

- 6.1 The Director of Program & Student Services or their designate in consultation with the Director of Operations or their designate is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and revision of this administrative procedure.
- 6.2 This administrative procedure will be monitored annually and/or updated when necessary by the Director of Operations in consultation with the Director of Programs and Student Services.