



**Operational  
Procedures  
for  
Inclement Weather  
Bus Cancellations  
& School Closures**

Revised: July 23, 2008

# **Inclement Weather Bus Cancellation Based on –25C Actual Temperature**

## **Early Morning**

### **1. The Manager of Transportation will:**

- check and assess the temperatures in all 4 divisions using Environment Canada's temperatures by 5:30 a.m.
- call the Lead Operator(s) for the affected division(s) by 5:45 a.m. to inform them the temperature has reached – 25C.
- receive recommendations by 6:20 a.m. from the Lead Bus Operator on whether buses should be cancelled.
- make a decision on the cancellation of the buses
- if the buses are cancelled the inclement weather phone tree for the cancellation of school buses and the closure of schools dependent on transportation goes into effect using the "2" media announcement.
- post the inclement weather announcement to the Boards web site by 6:30 a.m. to inform the public of the decision to cancel buses and close schools dependent on transportation.
- call the Directors of Education or designate to inform them of the decision to cancel school buses.

### **2. The Lead Bus Operator responsible for inclement weather within their division will:**

- be available at 5:45 a.m. to receive call from the Manager of Transportation in regard to the – 25C cold temperatures
- communicate with the other inclement weather decision making Operators within their division to see if they are able to operate their buses in the cold temperatures
- make a decision if the buses should operate by 6:15 a.m. If the decision of the Operators within their division is buses can operate no further action is taken.
- recommend to the Manager of Transportation by 6:20 a.m. that buses should be cancelled
- if the decision of the Manager of Transportation is buses cannot operate the inclement weather phone tree for the cancellation of school buses and the closure of schools dependent on transportation goes into effect using the "2" media announcement.

### **3. The Principal or designate on the "Inclement Weather Phone Tree" will:**

- be available to receive the inclement weather bus cancellation call
- call the people assigned to them on the inclement weather phone tree
- in the event a principal or designate is unable to contact their assigned people on the inclement weather tree, the principal will call the assigned contacts of the person they could not contact

#### **Note:**

If the actual temperature drops below -25C during the day buses will NOT be cancelled in the afternoon if the buses operate in the morning.

# **Inclement Weather Bus Cancellation Based on Weather and Road Conditions**

## **Early Morning**

### **1. The Manager of Transportation will:**

- investigate weather and road conditions for Wellington and Dufferin Counties prior to 5:45 a.m.
- communicate with the Lead Bus Operator in a division prior to 5:45 a.m. if weather or road conditions require further investigation
- receive recommendations by 6:20 a.m. from the Lead Bus Operator on whether buses should be cancelled.
- make a decision on the cancellation of the buses
- if the buses are cancelled the inclement weather phone tree for the cancellation of school buses and the closure of schools dependent on transportation goes into effect using the “2” media announcement.
- post the inclement weather announcement to the Boards web site by 6:30 a.m. to inform the public of the decision to cancel buses and close schools dependent on transportation.
- call the Directors of Education or designate to inform them of the decision to cancel school buses.

### **2. The Lead Bus Operator responsible for inclement weather within their division will:**

- communicate with the Road Superintendents between 5:45 a.m. and 6:15 a.m. to determine the condition of the roads
- communicate with the inclement weather decision making Operators between the hours of 5:45 a.m. and 6:15 a.m. to determine if the buses should operate based on the weather and road conditions
- make a decision if the buses should operate by 6:15 a.m. If the decision of the Operators within their division is buses can operate no further action is taken.
- recommend to the Manager of Transportation by 6:20 a.m. that buses should be cancelled
- if the decision of the Manager of Transportation is buses cannot operate the inclement weather phone tree for the cancellation of school buses and the closure of schools dependent on transportation goes into effect using the “2” media announcement.

### **3. The Principal or designate on the “Inclement Weather Phone Tree” will:**

- be available to receive the inclement weather bus cancellation call
- call the people assigned to them on the inclement weather phone tree
- in the event a principal or designate is unable to contact their assigned people on the inclement weather tree, the principal will call the assigned contacts of the person they could not contact

**Inclement Weather Bus Cancellation  
Based on Weather and Road Conditions  
Afternoon**

**1. The Manager of Transportation will:**

- investigate weather and road conditions for Wellington and Dufferin Counties prior to 1:30 p.m.
- communicate with the Lead Bus Operator in a division prior to 1:30 p.m. if weather or road conditions require further investigation
- receive recommendations by 2:10 p.m. from the Lead Bus Operator on whether buses should be cancelled.
- make a decision on the cancellation of the buses
- if the buses are cancelled the inclement weather phone tree for the cancellation of school buses in the afternoon will be effect using the “3” media announcement.
- will direct the consortium staff to call the affected schools informing the principal of the decision to cancel buses
- post the inclement weather announcement to the Boards web site by 2:30 p.m. to inform the public of the decision to cancel school buses.
- call the Directors of Education or designate to inform them of the decision to cancel school buses.

**2. The Lead Bus Operator responsible for inclement weather within their division will:**

- communicate with the Road Superintendents between 1:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to determine the condition of the roads
- communicate with the inclement weather decision making Operators between the hours of 1:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to determine if the buses should operate based on the weather and road conditions
- make a decision if the buses should operate by 2:00 p.m. If the decision of the Operators within their division is buses can operate no further action is taken.
- recommend to the Manager of Transportation by 2:10 p.m. that buses should be cancelled (Please use the bus emergency phone line – (519-824-7830)
- if the decision of the Manager of Transportation is buses cannot operate the inclement weather phone tree for the cancellation of school buses goes into effect using the “3” media announcement.
- inform all bus operators within the affected division of the decision to cancel the buses

**3. The Principal will:**

- be available to receive the inclement weather bus cancellation call
- call the people assigned to them on the inclement weather phone tree
- in the event a principal or designate is unable to contact their assigned people on the inclement weather tree, the principal will call the assigned contacts of the person they could not contact

**Inclement Weather Bus Emergency  
Based on Weather or Road Conditions  
After Commencement of Route**

**In the event a bus driver encounters a situation that effects the safe operation of the bus due to inclement weather or road conditions the following procedures will be followed:**

1. The Bus Driver will secure the vehicle and passenger(s) in a safe location then contact the Dispatcher giving the route number, location, number of students on board, the circumstances of the emergency and if the bus can follow its schedule. Example:
  - impassible road due to snow or ice – cannot proceed without assistance from grader or sander – bus will be late arriving at destination  
or
  - impassible road due to snow or ice – unable to travel down road (name) – unable to pick up or drop off student(s) (name).  
or
  - low visibility due to snow or fog – cannot proceed - at (safe) location -will not arrive at destination until (fog/snow) clears.

**Bus drivers will not return students home after they are picked up in the morning unless confirmation is received that there is an adult at home to receive the student(s).**

2. The Bus Operator will communicate with the local road superintendent(s) to arrange assistance for buses that cannot move because of the road conditions if required.
3. The Bus Operator will contact the school(s) and Wellington – Dufferin Student Transportation Services with the following information:  
The route number, the location of the vehicle the number of students on board and the circumstances of the emergency and if the bus can follow its schedule.
4. The Bus Operator will maintain correspondence with the school and Consortium with updates until the event is brought to a conclusion.

**In the event of a widespread inclement weather situation whereby buses are on the road and unable to maintain their schedule the Manager of Transportation will oversee the management of “Bus Emergency”**

1. The Manager of Transportation will:
  - inform the Senior Administrators of the “Bus Emergency”
  - request Principals of the bussed school affected by the “Bus Emergency” to be available at the school
  - inform the Principals that Consortium Staff are a resource for communications with the school, parents, bus operators and the media.
  - inform the Bus Operators that Consortium Staff are available as a resource for communication with parents, schools and the media
  - communicate the “Bus Emergency” through the local media and the Inclement Weather Bus Cancellation website.
  - set up a communications time table with the Principal to provide information from the Bus Operators on the status of the affected routes

- maintain communications with operators, schools, parents and the media on the status of vehicles during the “Bus Emergency”.
- maintain a record of the events that took place during the “Bus Emergency”

2. The Bus Driver will:

- secure the vehicle and passenger(s) in a safe location then contact the Dispatcher giving the route number, location, number of students on board, the circumstances of the emergency and if the bus can follow its schedule.

Example:

- impassible road due to snow or ice – cannot proceed without assistance from grader or sander – bus will be late arriving at destination  
or
- impassible road due to snow or ice – unable to travel down road (name) – unable to pick up or drop off student(s) (name).  
or
- low visibility due to snow or fog – cannot proceed - at (safe) location -will not arrive at destination until (fog/snow) clears.

**Bus drivers will not return students home after they are picked up in the morning unless confirmation is received that there is an adult at home to receive the student(s).**

3. The Bus Operator will:

- call the Manager of Transportation  
(Please use the bus emergency phone line – (519-824-7830)
- if required communicate with the local road superintendent(s) to arrange assistance for buses that cannot move because of the road conditions.
- set up a communications time table with the Consortium to provide information on the status of the affected routes for the schools, parents and the media with the following information:  
the route number(s)  
the location(s) of the vehicle(s)  
the number of students on board each vehicle  
the circumstances of the emergency for each vehicle
- will maintain correspondence with the Consortium with updates until the event is brought to a conclusion.
- maintain a record of the events that took place during the “Bus Emergency”

4. The Principal will:

- be available at the school during the “Bus Emergency”
- recruit school staff to be available to receive students from buses that return to the school (afternoon)
- set up a communications time table with the Consortium to provide information on the status of the affected routes
- provide information to parents in regard to the “Bus Emergency” based on the information provided by the Consortium through the Bus Operator(s)
- maintain correspondence with the Consortium until the event is brought to a conclusion.
- maintain a record of the events that took place during the “Bus Emergency”

**Inclement Weather School Closure**  
**Based on Temperature –35C with Windchill**  
**Early Morning**

1. The Manager of Transportation or designate will check and assess the temperatures in all 4 divisions using Environment Canada's windchill index by 5:15 am
2. If the temperature has reached –35C with windchill the Manager of Transportation or designate will make telephone calls to the Directors' of Education or designates by 5:30 a.m. The Manager or designate will inform the Directors or designates the temperature has reached –35C with windchill in any or all 4 divisions and recommends the closure of all schools within the divisions affected.
3. The Manager of Transportation or designate will call the Lead Operator(s) immediately following the telephone calls to the Directors' of Education or designates for the affected division(s) to inform them the temperature has reached – 35C with windchill and is seeking approval from the Directors or designates for school closure in their division.
4. The Directors' of Education or designates will contact their respective Chairperson of the Board immediately after receiving the telephone call from the Manager of Transportation or designate for approval to close the affected schools.
5. The Directors' of Education will call the Manager of Transportation or designate with the school closure decision by 5:45 am.
6. The Manager of Transportation or designate will call the Lead Operator(s) with the decision to close schools immediately following the telephone calls from the Directors or designates.
7. If the decision is to close schools Lead Operator(s) will start the inclement weather phone tree for their division using the "1" media announcement.
8. The Manager of Transportation or designate will post the inclement weather announcement to the Board's web site by 6:30 a.m. informing the public of the decision to cancel buses and close schools.

Revised: July 23, 2008

**Inclement Weather School Closure**  
**Based on Weather and Road Conditions**  
**Early Morning**

1. The Manager of Transportation or designate will check and assess the weather in all 4 divisions using Environment Canada's Weather Warnings and Watches by 4:45 am.
2. The Manager of Transportation or designate will call the Lead Operator(s) for the affected division(s) by 5:00 am to inform them the weather is possibly severe enough to close schools in addition to bus cancellations.
3. The Lead Operators will communicate with the Road Superintendents and the other inclement weather decision making Operators within their division by 5:15am to determine if the buses should operate and offer an opinion to the Manager of Transportation on school closures for their division based on weather and road conditions.
4. If it is the opinion of Operators within their division, that buses should not operate and schools should be closed, the Manager of Transportation will inform the Lead Operators NOT to start their phone tree for bus cancellations until approval of the school closures is received from the Directors.
5. If it is the opinion of Operators within their division, that schools should not be closed, the Manager of Transportation will inform the Lead Operators to start the inclement weather phone tree to cancel buses for their division.
6. If the weather and road conditions are severe enough to recommend closure of schools with any or all 4 divisions the Manager of Transportation or designate will make telephone calls to the Directors' of Education or designates by 5:30 a.m. The Manager or designate will recommend to the Directors, that schools should close in addition to canceling buses based on weather and road conditions in affected divisions.
7. The Directors' of Education or designates will contact their respective Chairperson of the Board immediately after receiving the telephone call from the Manager of Transportation or designate for approval to close the affected schools.
8. The Directors' of Education or designates will call the Manager of Transportation or designate with the school closure decision by 5:45 am.
9. The Manager of Transportation or designate will call the Lead Operator(s) with the decision to close schools immediately following the telephone calls from the Directors
10. If the decision is to close schools, the Manager of Transportation will inform the Lead Operator(s) to start the inclement weather phone tree for their division using the "1" media announcement.
11. If the decision is to have schools remain open, the Manager of Transportation will inform the Lead Operator(s) to start the inclement weather phone tree for their division using the "2" media announcement.

12. The Manager of Transportation or designate will post the inclement weather announcement to the Board's web site by 6:30 a.m. informing the public of the decision to cancel buses and/or close schools.

Revised: July 23, 2008

# **MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **Early Morning Announcements**

### **Bus Cancellation Media Announcement # 1**

“All school taxis and buses in (appropriate division(s)) will not be operating today. All schools, Public, Catholic and French language, are open with the exception of those schools dependent on transportation. The following schools are closed: (schools are listed according to the division affected”).

### **School Closure Media Announcement # 2**

“All school taxis and buses in (state division(s)) will not be operating today. All schools, Pubic, Catholic and French language, are closed.”

## **Afternoon Announcements**

### **Bus Cancellation Media Announcement # 3**

“All school taxis and buses in (appropriate division (s)) will not be operating this afternoon. Students that travel on school taxis or buses will remain at their school.”

“All schools will follow their Emergency Plans for afternoon bus cancellations.

Please contact your child’s school for further information.

Parents are reminded to use extreme caution if they choose to travel to the school to pick up their children.”

July 23, 2008