

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Approved: Feb. 96

Revised: Jan. 97, Dec 2000, Jun. 2003

EBCD

*Cross Reference: EBC, School Emergency Plans
HCA, School Calendars*

Legal References: Sections 56, 57, 60 School Act

POLICY

The Board is responsible for ensuring that each of its students is provided with an education. Therefore, schools shall remain open to students during the times and dates established by the Board. However, the Board may temporarily suspend school bus services and close a school building if the health and safety of students and staff is endangered.

DEFINITIONS

Regions:

1. Strathcona Region (excluding the Hamlet of Sherwood Park and the City of Fort Saskatchewan).
2. Urban Region – Hamlet of Sherwood Park and City of Fort Saskatchewan.
3. Lamont Region
4. Minburn Region

GUIDELINES

1. School bus service shall be suspended by the Superintendent/designate when:
 - (a) Region 1 Strathcona Region
Temperature of -40° C or a wind chill factor of -50° C as measured at the Edmonton International Airport at 5:00 a.m.
 - (b) Region 2 Hamlet of Sherwood Park and City of Fort Saskatchewan
Temperature of -40° C or a wind chill factor of -50° C as measured at the Edmonton Weather Office at 5:00 a.m.
 - (c) Region 3 Lamont Region
Temperature of -40° C or a wind chill factor of -50° C as measured at Lamont Elementary School at 5:00 a.m.
 - (d) Region 4 Minburn Region
Temperature of -40° C or a wind chill factor of -50° C as measured at the Vegreville Environment Centre at 5:00 a.m.
2. School bus services may also be suspended or delayed by the Superintendent/designate due to adverse weather or road conditions.
3. When school bus services are suspended by the Superintendent/designate, schools shall remain open to students. All staff members are expected to report to work. On scheduled Diploma Examination dates, students who arrive at school must be allowed to write the examination.
4. A staff member at his/her regular residence who, because of impassable roads/severe conditions, cannot get to school shall be paid full salary. The staff member shall immediately notify his/her principal of this circumstance.

5. A staff member absent and more than 100 km away from his/her regular residence who cannot return to work because of impassable road conditions shall be paid salary, less the cost of a substitute, for the days absent. Written information concerning the road conditions shall be provided by the staff member at the time of completing the payroll information report.
6. Suspension of school bus services may be limited to a specific region of Elk Island Public Schools.
7. The Superintendent/designate may suspend bus services on a route by route basis. When this occurs, all schools shall remain open. No school bus service will be provided on this route(s) for the day.
8. When weather or road conditions deteriorate during the day, the Student Transportation Director/designate may authorize individual or all buses to leave school prior to regular dismissal time.
9. Should weather conditions be extreme or deteriorate during the day in a particular region/area, the principal, in consultation with the Superintendent/designate may close the school to all students and staff. The principal, staff and school bus operators must take steps to ensure students arrive home safely when they are dismissed earlier than the regular dismissal times. This includes contact with parents/guardians to ensure students have adequate access to residences.
10. If unsafe road conditions occur, an individual bus operator has the discretionary power to decide not to operate or to abandon completion of the morning route by returning students to their homes. The bus operator must ensure students have adequate access to residences.
11. In the event that road and/or weather conditions are extreme, the Superintendent/designate may authorize that staff are not to report to work. For safety purposes, the principal shall ensure that some staff be at school to temporarily accommodate students who report to school.
12. For the safety of students it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that:
 - (a) Their children are suitably dressed for coping with weather conditions.
 - (b) Arrangements have been made for alternate shelter for their child if no one is home.

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1. Parents and school bus operators shall be advised by a September School bulletin of the procedures used for the suspension of school bus service. The same information will be published through other appropriate communication channels.
2. Transportation advisors shall be appointed in each region within Elk Island Public Schools, to assist the Student Transportation Director/designate in formulating a recommendation regarding suspension of school bus service due to inclement weather or road conditions.
3. Transportation advisors, following consultation with other bus operators in their respective areas shall communicate their recommendation to the Student Transportation Director/designate.
4. The Student Transportation Director/designate, shall take into account the advice of the RCMP, Alberta Motor Association, weather office and area transportation advisors when making a recommendation to the Superintendent/designate regarding suspension of school bus service based on either weather or road conditions.
5. The Superintendent/designate, shall make a decision regarding school bus suspension before 5:30 a.m. or the previous night if conditions make it obvious that service will be suspended the following day.
6. The transportation advisor, upon suspension of school bus service as confirmed by the Student Transportation Director/designate, shall implement telephone fan out notification of other school bus operators.
7. Parents who have brought their children to school on days when school bus services are suspended because of inclement weather or hazardous road conditions will be responsible for picking up their children.
8. Should extreme weather conditions prevail causing schools to be closed and staff are not expected to report for work, staff would not have to submit individual explanations regarding their absence.
9. In situations of deteriorating weather conditions;
 - a) The Student Transportation Director/designate, shall communicate with principals of schools in the area, as well as the Superintendent/designate. The Student Transportation Director/designate shall communicate the decision to the transportation advisor who shall advise the bus operators in his area. All buses in the area affected shall leave the school simultaneously.
 - b) A bus driver who cannot complete the morning route shall inform the transportation advisor and the Student Transportation Director/designate of the decision. The Student Transportation Director/designate shall inform the principal of the school, all parents on the route and the Superintendent/designate.

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10. Bus operators are to hold themselves in readiness for service in cases of pending extreme conditions.
11. Under Guidelines 3 and 6, the Director of Communications/designate shall advise all radio stations of the Superintendent/designate decision so that it may be broadcast commencing at 6:00 a.m. or in special circumstances the evening before.
12. The Director of Communications/designate shall notify the subfinder secretary to advise all assigned substitutes of the school closure.
13. The Director of Communications/designate shall compose an appropriate taped message for the Central switchboard which will be accessible after 6:30 a.m. Phone Number 464-3477.
14. In the event of implementation of school bus service stoppage, the Director of Communications/designate shall incorporate into the published message to principals, staff attendance expectations.
15. A special phone line will be made available to principals or designate to enable them to confirm messages delivered through radio broadcasts.
16. When bus services are suspended, it is the responsibility of the Principal to determine the learning activities that will occur for students. This may be dependent upon the number of students in attendance and other local /school factors.
17. Under Guideline 4, the principal shall decide whether a substitute is required. The school will cover the cost of the substitute if required.