



Weather Related Emergencies

Park West School Division prioritizes the safety of students and staff. The Division is responsible for student safety from when students board the bus in the morning until they are delivered back to their designated stop after school, according to the Public Schools Act and supporting regulations. This procedure outlines the process for cancellation of bus service and possible school closures if bus transportation is deemed unsafe due to road or weather conditions.

Authority for Decisions

The Superintendent/CEO, in consultation with the Transportation Supervisor, has the authority to decide whether there is a full or partial cancellation of bus service and/or school closures due to severe weather.

Wind Chill Days

- When the wind chill factor is between -40 and -44, the Transportation Supervisor will consider existing road and local weather conditions to determine the advisability of school bus service.
- School bus service will be cancelled if the wind chill factor reaches -45, as reported by Environment Canada for the Shoal Lake weather station at 6:00 am. On days in which the windchill reaches -45, all divisional buses will be cancelled. Schools will remain open, and all staff will report for work at their school as usual. Student attendance is at the discretion of parents/guardians
- In instances of extreme wind chill (-50 or worse), school closures may be considered.

Other Adverse Weather Conditions

- Adverse weather conditions include situations in which road conditions or forecasts/reports of impending weather conditions create visibility issues and/or other conditions that make travel unsafe or impossible.
- Adverse weather conditions may include reduced visibility due to extreme fog and/or blowing snow and/or hazardous road conditions or road closures due to snow and/or ice-covered sections.
- Parents/guardians have knowledge of the actual and probable road and weather conditions in their area and should exercise discretion in permitting their children to ride the bus when weather conditions are, or are expected to become, problematic. In such instances, parents/guardians should call the school if their children will not be attending.



Procedures for Bus Cancellations and/or School Closures

a. Communication:

Individual Bus Cancellations: Individual bus drivers will notify parents/guardians. The divisional School Messenger service may also be used to communicate with parents/guardians via text, email, and/or phone call.

Full Day Division-wide Bus Cancellations and School Closures: The Transportation Supervisor or designate will:

- o Notify regional radio stations by 6:45 am.
- o Send notification of the cancellation to stakeholders (parents, guardians, staff, and community members) by 6:45 am via the divisional School Messenger service.
- o Post the announcement on the Park West School Division website www.pwsd.ca and on divisional social media.

Bus Cancellations During the School Day: Individual schools will notify parents/guardian. In situations when parents/guardians cannot be reached, schools will follow established emergency contact protocols including possible billeting of students.

b. Individual Bus Cancellations:

- Individual bus drivers may decide, in consultation with the Transportation Supervisor, whether they can safely get students to school that morning.
- If the bus driver is unable to make the regular run, they shall inform the Transportation Supervisor and the parents/guardians on the route.
- The Transportation Supervisor shall inform the principal of the school and the Superintendent/CEO.
- For individual bus cancellations, schools will remain open, and all staff will report for work at their school as usual. Student attendance is at the discretion of parents/guardians.

c. Community or Division-Wide Bus Cancellations:

- The Transportation Supervisor will consult with community bus captains and recommend to the Superintendent/CEO whether weather conditions are such that bus service is inadvisable in some communities or Division-wide.
- For community or Division-wide bus cancellations, schools will remain open, and all staff will report for work at their school as usual. Student attendance is at the discretion of parents/guardians.



d. School Closures:

- The Transportation Supervisor will consult with community bus captains and the Superintendent/CEO to determine whether weather conditions are such that school closure is advisable in some communities or Division-wide.
- If one or more schools are closed, staff and students from those schools do not attend.
- The school principal, or if designated, the head custodian, is responsible for the safety and security of the building on all closure days. The principal must also ensure that someone is at the school in the morning to meet any students that may come to school inadvertently and will arrange for their care until they can be safely picked up or transported home. In cases where principals do not live in the community, it is expected that the principal will make appropriate arrangements.
- On school closure days due to inclement weather, there will be no after school or evening student extracurricular activities or community use of schools, including travel for extracurricular activities that may be scheduled the following day.

e. Afternoon Bus Cancellations:

- To ensure the safety of transported students, it is recommended that buses do not leave the school at other than regularly scheduled times at the end of the school day.
- If the weather deteriorates significantly during the day (e.g., sudden blizzard, flash freezing, tornado warning), buses may not run in the afternoon.
- This decision will be made by 2:00 pm so that schools have ample time to notify parents/guardians and/or arrange appropriate billets.
- Parents are responsible for naming possible local billets if the buses are unable to run after school.

f. Field Trip Bus Delays/Cancellations:

- If the weather deteriorates significantly during a field trip (e.g., sudden blizzard, flash freezing, tornado warning), buses may not run. In these instances, alternate plans will be made to ensure the safety of students and staff.