



Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division # 81

Safety and Emergency Measures 10510 Severe Weather and Bus Travel and Transportation	Administrative Application	
	Effective:	December 18, 2018
	References:	5300 – Transportation of Students 5301 – Specialized Transportation for Students with Intensive Needs Policy 12 – Role of the Director Policy 16 - Transportation
	Status:	Operational

Preamble

Severe weather can be a part of a Saskatchewan winter. Severe weather may include very cold temperatures, wind chill, blizzards, heavy snow, ice storms, and impassable roads. Any one of these conditions or a combination thereof might hinder and make the transportation of children unsafe.

Application

1. School Closures Due to Severe Weather

In cases of severe weather (i.e. a blizzard with zero visibility, snow and extremely cold temperatures) the Regina Catholic School Division (RCSD), may cancel classes, but closing buildings is a rare occurrence. If classes are cancelled, our schools will do the very best to have a staff member at the school. However, storm conditions may prevent this from happening.

Many factors are taken into consideration when considering the cancellation of classes, but the safety of students and staff is the primary consideration in the decision making process.

2. What Parents/Guardians Need To Do

Parents/guardians will need to have alternate arrangements in place for their children in cases where classes are cancelled; and children should be aware of these alternate arrangements. It is important that parents/guardians provide their child's school all of the important contact numbers, including emergency phone numbers and a telephone number at which you the parent/guardian can be reached immediately.

As primary caregivers, parents/guardians are able to decide what is best for their children. The option to keep children at home when weather conditions are extreme is at the parent's discretion. As a school division, we have a responsibility to educate your child and work very hard to minimize any interruption to your child's education. And as a result, classes are interrupted only on rare occasions.

3. Cancellation of School Bus Operator and ParaTransit Buses

We expect school buses to operate as scheduled under most weather and urban travel conditions usually experienced in Saskatchewan. There should be very few occasions when severe weather and adverse operating conditions affect school bus service, however, when these conditions arise, school bus service may be delayed, altered or cancelled.

Parents whose children are bused to school are responsible for monitoring winter weather conditions and for having an alternate plan if the school bus is cancelled due to severe weather. Please ensure your child is familiar with your alternate plan. If parents believe there is a risk of



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harm before their child gets on the bus (for example, severely cold weather), it is the parent's responsibility to arrange for a safe way for their child to meet the school bus or seek alternate shelter. If the school bus is cancelled, it is the parent's responsibility to make alternate arrangements to get their child to school safely.

During the coldest winter months, please listen to the local radio stations in the morning for information about school bus cancellations. Our transportation provider relies on the local media to help them let parents know if buses are cancelled due to severe weather. Information will also be available through the Regina Catholic School Division's Twitter account **@RCSD_No81** and on the school division's web site at www.rcsd.ca.

Para Transit buses are automatically cancelled for the entire day when Environment Canada reports the temperature with wind chill at **6:00 a.m. is minus 40 degrees Celsius or colder**.

School buses are automatically cancelled for the entire day when Environment Canada reports the temperature with wind chill at **6:00 a.m. is minus 45 degrees Celsius or colder**.

Severe weather and adverse operating conditions include, but are not limited to:

- high winds
- poor visibility
- extremely cold temperatures
- high wind chill factors
- blizzards
- snowdrifts, deeply rutted or snowbound roads
- torrential rain, flooding, mud

The safety of students and safety of drivers is the overriding consideration when a decision is made to delay, alter or cancel bus service. That decision is made jointly by the School Bus Operator, Regina Public School Division, and Regina Catholic School Division.

4. **Cancellation of Taxi Cabs**

The safety of students and safety of drivers is the overriding consideration when a decision is made to delay, alter or cancel taxicab service. The decision is made jointly by the Regina Catholic School Division and the taxi cab company.

5. **Cancellation to Bus Service During the Day**

In the event that buses are cancelled for the return trip home at the end of the day, the school division's transportation officer works with the School Bus Operator to communicate this information to the media as outlined above. Students will remain at the school until a parent or guardian picks them up and signs them out of school. In the case of students who are transported to school by taxi cab, the school division's Transportation Officer will work closely with the taxi cab company to arrange for cab pick-up if it is feasible.

In high school, if the weather is so severe and/or students cannot drive their cars home they should return to the school until a parent or guardian can be contacted. Students should not attempt to walk home unless parental permission has been granted.

6. **Severe Weather and Out of the City Bus Travel**

In the event, that impending weather of a severe nature might prohibit out-of-city travel, the school administration should consult with their superintendent to determine the appropriate plan of action.



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Depending on the impending weather situation, considerations for this plan will include the consultation with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and the highway hotline which outlines the highway travel conditions.

Safety of our students is the overriding consideration when a decision is made to delay, alter or cancel student travel. However, out-of-city travel will not occur when the road conditions are deemed unsafe as indicated on www.saskatchewan.ca/highways, specifically travel not recommended and road closed.



Regina Catholic Schools

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE REGINA ROMAN CATHOLIC SEPARATE SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 81

Safety and Emergency Measures: Cancellation of Student Transportation

Dear Parents:

Our transportation provider, has implemented new procedures for operation of buses during cold weather. Regina Catholic School Division (RCSD) has updated our policies accordingly and would like to advise you of the new procedures.

RCSD expects school buses to operate as scheduled under most weather and urban travel conditions usually experienced in Saskatchewan. There should be very few occasions when severe weather and adverse operating conditions affect school bus service. However, when these conditions arise school bus service may be delayed, altered, or cancelled. Parents/guardians are responsible for having alternate arrangements in place for their children to be transported to or from school in the event of transportation being cancelled. Students should be aware of what these arrangements are; please ensure your child is familiar with your alternate plan.

- **Para Transit buses** are automatically cancelled for the entire day when Environment Canada reports the temperature with wind chill at 6:00 a.m. is **minus 40 degrees Celsius or colder**.
- **Transportation (buses and cabs)** are automatically cancelled for the entire day when Environment Canada reports the temperature with wind chill at 6:00 a.m. is **minus 45 degrees Celsius or colder**.

Our transportation provider relies on the local media to let parents know if buses are cancelled due to severe weather. During the coldest winter months, please listen to the local radio stations in the morning as information will be relayed about school bus cancellations by 7:00 a.m. Information will also be available through the RCS Twitter account **@RCSD_No81**, on the school division's website at www.rcsd.ca and bus planner <https://bus.rcsd.ca/>

Other conditions may arise and result in school bus service being delayed, altered, or cancelled including, but are not limited to high winds, poor visibility, extremely cold temperatures, high wind chill factors, blizzards, snowdrifts, deeply rutted or snowbound roads, torrential rain, flooding, mud.

Cancellation of bus service during the school day

In the event that buses have run as usual in the morning but during the day it becomes necessary to cancel the return trip home at the end of the day, the school division's transportation officer works with the transportation provider to communicate this information to the media as outlined above. During times of inclement weather please monitor the local radio stations to determine if school buses are being cancelled due to any of the above listed conditions, or any other emergent conditions that are making driving difficult in the city.

Students will remain at the school until a parent or guardian picks them up and signs them out of school.

Please be assured that the safety of your children is always the overriding consideration when a decision is made to delay, alter, or cancel student travel.