



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY No. 805

IMPLEMENTATION FALL 2007
REVISED OCTOBER 17, 2016

CLOSURE – SEVERE WEATHER AND STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Because of its geographic size, it is possible that severe weather conditions may affect parts of the division when other parts are unaffected. As a result, Prairie Spirit School Division believes that enabling policy providing local discretion in dealing with weather conditions is both prudent and appropriate.

The Director of Education or designate is authorized to dismiss students, discontinue transportation services, and/or close school in emergency situations.

PROCEDURES

1. Responsibility of the Director of Education

- a. Delegation of authority by the Director of Education or designate to dismiss students and/or close schools is appropriate and expected.
- b. Adverse winter driving conditions may be valid reasons for non-operation of school buses.

2. Early Morning Decisions

SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS

- a. Environment Canada Saskatoon temperatures are to be used as a guide for all schools, with the exception of Blaine Lake, Duck Lake and Leask, which are to use Prince Albert temperatures, in determining if buses should run. Contacts for Saskatoon and area may be made at (306) 975-4266 or www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca. Contacts for Prince Albert and area (includes Duck Lake, Blaine Lake and Leask) may be made at (306) 929-2114 or www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca.

Buses are not to run if the combined temperature/wind chill factors result in a reading of -40 degrees Celsius or below at

6:00 a.m. Buses that do not run at the regular time in the morning due to a -40 degrees Celsius combined temperature/wind chill weather conditions are not to run at all on that same day.

If the buses are cancelled for the day, the Conveyance Manager or designate will update the [Bus Cancellations](#) page on the Division website after 6:00 a.m. An information hotline (306-683-2805) with a recorded message on the status of buses not running will be available.

- b. If buses do not operate due to a -40 degrees Celsius combined temperature/wind chill (as per (a) above), educational tours or extra-curricular travel by bus scheduled for later in the day will also be cancelled. Cancellation of educational tours or extra-curricular travel by private vehicle is to be at the discretion of the Principal applying the following conditions:
 - i. All cold/severe weather criteria identified in Division criteria must be followed before any tours or trips are permitted.
 - ii. There is no current weather advisory against travel.
 - iii. The Highway Hot Line and Environment Canada do not post advisories that travel is not recommended.
 - iv. A record is maintained regarding confirmation of above details (i.e. time, date of calls, etc.).
- c. In addition to the criteria in (b) above, extra-curricular travel in private vehicles is permissible in temperatures of -40 degrees Celsius or below subject to conditions set out in the [Protocol for Extra-Curricular Travel in Private Vehicles](#).
- d. Buses equipped with wheelchair lifts are not to operate if the combined factors result in a reading of -35 degrees Celsius or below at 6:00 a.m. using the Environment Canada "Saskatoon" temperatures/wind chill for all schools, except Blaine Lake, Duck Lake and Leask, which schools shall use "Prince Albert" data. Determination of which buses are dedicated for special needs will be determined by the Conveyance Manager.
- e. During spring melting and prolonged rainy weather, road conditions can deteriorate. Bus drivers should consult with families on their route to determine if roads are safe to travel

and use their individual discretion whether or not to travel down certain roads, provide yard service or choose an alternate route/road to travel on.

- f. Buses are not to operate if weather conditions, such as freezing rain, dense fog, heavy rain or severe dust storms, impair visibility or otherwise cause dangerous travel conditions.
- g. The good judgment of bus drivers in their decisions regarding safety is to be supported.
- h. Bus drivers are to decide whether or not to run by no later than thirty (30) minutes before the first scheduled morning pick up, and by no later than one (1) hour prior to the scheduled afternoon dismissal.
- i. If a decision is made not to operate (except as in (a) above) a rural bus route, the bus driver is to immediately inform the school principal and Prairie Spirit Bus Shop (306-374-2496) no later than 7:15 a.m. The bus driver will also inform all families on the route about the decision not to run. If the bus does not run due to mechanical problems, the route will only be cancelled for the morning or afternoon run. Consultation with a service technician is required for determining if a repair or another bus will allow for the route to be run.
- j. Notwithstanding (h) above, if the Conveyance Manager or designate makes a decision not to operate in-town busing in the City of Warman or the City of Martensville, the Conveyance Manager or designate will inform the school principal immediately.
- k. There is to be no early dismissal due to deteriorating weather conditions. If, after consultation between the school principal and bus driver, it is determined that the buses will not run at the regular dismissal time, the school principal will ensure that previously arranged in-town billeting is to be used for bus students. The school will also ensure families are notified of those arrangements in the event the families are unable to pick up their child from school.
- l. Schools remain open for staff and students despite inclement weather and will only be closed in the event of a threat to health and/or safety. Parents are welcome to

transport their children to school at any time during the regular school day.

Protocol for Extra-Curricular Travel in Private Vehicles

Introduction

Administrative Policy 805, Closure - Severe Weather and Student Transportation, governs all travel in severe weather conditions in Prairie Spirit School Division, including extra-curricular travel. This policy specifically details conditions for bus transportation.

The following protocol provides guidance for travel in private vehicles for extra-curricular activities as Policy 805 does not specifically make reference to private vehicle travel.

Protocol

According to Policy 805, school personnel must refer to the Environment Canada weather office to determine current weather conditions. Coaches and officials are advised to monitor weather and highway conditions the day before the event, the morning of travel and throughout the day. In addition to consulting Environment Canada and the Highway Hot Line, Administrators should use their discretion to make decisions regarding travel based on local weather and/or road conditions.

When travel proceeds for extra-curricular events with good travel conditions and a combined temperature and wind chill below -40°C , the following protocol must be adhered to:

- The principal is made aware of the travel plan and consulted before travel proceeds.
- Parents are made aware of the severe temperatures and provide permission for their child to participate in the extra-curricular travel.
- The coach has a phoning tree which includes phone numbers for team members, coaches, home contacts and school administration.
- There is at least one cell phone in each vehicle.
- Each vehicle has a contact number for the coach.
- As much as possible, vehicles travel in a convoy.
- Players phone home before leaving the site of tournament or game to indicate that the team is beginning travel home.
- Once the adult driver has dropped off all passengers, the driver contacts the coach.
- The coach phones the principal or vice-principal to indicate that the tournament or game is over and all travel is completed.

References

Coach

For this protocol, "coach" refers to the Prairie Spirit staff member or approved volunteer overseeing the activity.

[Administrative Policy 805 – Closure – Severe Weather and Student Transportation](#)

Environment Canada

(306) 975-4266 Saskatoon and area

(306) 929-2114 Prince Albert and area

Saskatoon temperatures are to be used as a guide for all schools, with the exception of Duck Lake, Blaine Lake and Leask, which are to use Prince Albert temperatures.

Highway Hot Line

1-888-335-7623

Travel is not allowed if there is a current weather advisory against travel posted on the Highway Hot Line stating "Travel Not Recommended" and/or "Road Closed".