



Niagara Catholic District School Board

**SCHOOL OPERATIONS**  
**FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER AND WORKPLACE CLOSURE POLICY**

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

500 – Auxiliary Services

Policy No 500.1

Adopted Date: February 24, 1998

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: December 6, 2021

The Director of Education is authorized to cancel the transportation of students and close schools or board facilities when safety issues arise due to anticipated or occurring inclement weather, or when the normal operations of a board facility are affected.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director of Niagara Student Transportation Services to monitor weather conditions in order to ensure the safe transportation of students. In the absence of the Executive Director of Niagara Student Transportation Services and/or the Director of Education (or designate), the Superintendent of Business and Financial Services is responsible for making and communicating decisions regarding bus cancellations and/or school closures due to inclement weather.

### ENVIRONMENT CANADA WEATHER STATEMENTS

When weather warnings are announced by Environment Canada:

1. The Executive Director of Niagara Student Transportation Services will contact one or more of the following agencies to obtain weather information regarding the affected areas served by Niagara Student Transportation Services:
  - Transportation contractors serving the board
  - Ontario Provincial Police
  - Niagara Regional Police
  - Weather forecasting sources
  - Other area school board and transportation contacts
2. Based on this information, the Executive Director of Niagara Student Transportation Services will inform the Director of Education or designate regarding the cancellation of transportation in the area(s) affected by the inclement weather.
3. It is the responsibility of the Director of Education or designate to make a decision to:
  - Keep schools open or close all schools, a group of schools, and/or board facilities.
  - Modify the school or work day to permit early or late dismissal for inclement weather or when normal operations of a board facility are affected.
4. Every effort will be made to announce transportation cancellations, school closures and board facilities closures to the public by 6:00 a.m.
5. When the decision is made, staff shall implement the responsibilities in Appendices A, B, and C.

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A** *Cancel Transportation and Close Schools, a Group of Schools or Board facilities*

**Appendix C** *Cancellation of Secondary Late Activity Transportation*

**Appendix C** *Modify the School or Work Day to Permit Early or Late Dismissal for Inclement Weather or when normal operations of a board facility are affected.*

<b>Adopted Date:</b>	<b>February 24, 1998</b>
<b>Revision History:</b>	<b>March 19, 2013</b> <b>February 26, 2019</b> <b>December 6, 2021</b>

## **CANCEL TRANSPORTATION AND CLOSE SCHOOLS, A GROUP OF SCHOOLS OR BOARD SITES**

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – NIAGARA STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

The Executive Director of Niagara Student Transportation Services will communicate the decision to:

- All local radio and TV stations, newspapers and online publishing for immediate broadcast
- Bus contractors
- Taxi operators
- Niagara Student Transportation Services website, automated phone attendant and Twitter

### **THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION/DESIGNATE**

The Director of Education shall communicate, via email, the decision, when feasible before 5:45 a.m., to:

- Executive Director – Niagara Student Transportation Services
- Trustees
- Senior Administrative Council
- Communications Officer

### **COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**

The Communications Officer will ensure that:

- The Board website and social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and voicemail (school closure only) reflect the decision
- The Catholic Education Centre voice mail system message states the decision
- An email message is sent to CEC staff, principals, vice-principals and administrators of the decision
- A voice message will be sent through School Messenger to staff through the contact number provided to Human Resource Service along with an email – school closure only
- Smart Find Express – Human Resources Administrator is informed

### **CONTROLLER OF FACILITIES SERVICES**

The Controller of Facilities Services will communicate the appropriate decision to snow removal providers and Facilities Services staff.

## **CANCELLATION OF SECONDARY LATE ACTIVITY TRANSPORTATION**

Late buses are automatically cancelled if regular home to school transportation is cancelled. There may also be times that late activity buses are cancelled if that weather deteriorates/is expected to deteriorate during the day. In the event that this happens, the following procedure is to be followed:

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – NIAGARA STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

The Executive Director of Niagara Student Transportation Services shall communicate the decision to cancel late activity buses by 10:45 a.m. to:

- The Director of Education/designate
- Local media outlets

The Executive Director will ensure that this information is on the NSTS website and Twitter account.

### **THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION/DESIGNATE**

The Director of Education will communicate the decision to the following individuals by 11 a.m.:

- Senior Administrative Council
- Principals
- Trustees
- Communications Officer

### **PRINCIPALS**

Principals will make an announcement to the school community to notify students of the cancellation of late buses.

### **COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**

The Communications Officer will ensure that:

- The Board website and social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) reflect the decision
- A central School Messenger message is sent to all secondary families

## **MODIFYING THE SCHOOL OR WORK DAY TO PERMIT EARLY OR LATE DISMISSAL FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER**

### **SYSTEM-WIDE EARLY OR LATE DISMISSAL**

#### **DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION/DESIGNATE**

The Director of Education or designate, in coordination with the Director or designate from the coterminous board, notifies the following if there are weather-related changes to the school day (early dismissal, or keeping students at school until roads can be cleared) in a single school, family of schools, or across the system:

- Senior Administrative Council
- Principals
- Trustees
- Communications Officer
- Executive Director of NSTS (in particular, if buses were not cancelled before the start of school)

#### **COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**

The Communications Officer will ensure that:

- The Board website and social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and voicemail (school closure only) reflect the decision
- A School Messenger is sent to all families centrally to advise them of the decision
- The Catholic Education Centre voice mail system message states the decision
- Email message is sent to CEC staff, principals, vice-principals and administrators of the decision

### **LOCALIZED EARLY OR LATE DISMISSAL**

#### **PRINCIPAL**

Based on weather in a specific area, a school principal may recommend that students at their school be dismissed early or late.

The principal is to make a request for an early or late dismissal through their Family of Schools Superintendent. If the FOS Superintendent is not available, the request is to be made to the Director or designate for consideration. If the request is granted, the principal will contact families of students in attendance at school to advise of the changes to the school day.

#### **FAMILY OF SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT**

If a request from an individual principal, or from several principals within a geographic area request an early or late dismissal for students based on weather, has been received by a FOS Superintendent, the request will be brought forward to the Director of Education for consideration.

## **THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

When a decision has been made to close schools early or extend the day for safety reasons, the Director of Education will advise:

- Executive Director – Niagara Student Transportation Services (if buses were not previously cancelled for the day)
- Trustees
- Senior Administrative Council
- Communications Officer

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – NIAGARA STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

If buses have been operational for the start of the school day, the Executive Director of Niagara Student Transportation Services shall communicate an aligned the decision to:

- All radio and TV stations, newspapers and online publishing for immediate broadcast
- Bus Contractors
- Taxi Operators
- Niagara Student Transportation Services website, automated phone attendant and Twitter

## **COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**

The Communications Officer will ensure that:

- The Board and school website reflects the decision
- The Catholic Education Centre voice mail system message states the decision
- Email message is sent to CEC staff, principals, vice-principals and administrators of the decision
- The Board website, Facebook and Twitter states the decision
- Smart Find Express – Human Resources Administrator is informed

## **CONTROLLER OF FACILITIES SERVICES**

The Controller of Facilities Services shall communicate the appropriate decisions to snow removal providers and Facilities Services staff.

## **PRINCIPALS**

Principals and/or designate shall ensure that:

- Prior to an early or late dismissal, contact is made with all parents or guardians to confirm that parental arrangements have been made for students to return home safely following dismissal during a modified school day
- Staff remain at the school until the principal is satisfied that the students have been dismissed safely

The principal or designate may authorize certain staff members to leave earlier than others due to travelling distance and severity of weather conditions in certain municipalities.