Living Sky School Division No. 202

Administrative Procedure (AP) Manual

Procedure Name: Severe Weather			
Procedure Type:	Transportation	**Implementation Date:**	JAN 26, 2011
Procedure Number:	8.05	**Last Revision Date:**	SEP 28, 2026
AP Owner:	Transportation Coordinator	**Last Review Date:**	SEP 28, 2026
Legal Reference(s):	*The Education Act, 1995, s. 196*		

Background

Severe weather conditions require Living Sky School Division (LSKYSD) staff to weigh two different mandates of Transportation Services: ensuring student safety and supporting good attendance. Occasionally, LSKYSD may require service providers to suspend student transportation when there is a real risk to the safety of staff and students.

Scope

This procedure directly applies to staff who must implement procedures and protocols related to the cancellation of transportation services due to severe weather:

- service providers
- school principals, and
- the transportation coordinator.

Definitions

Adverse road conditions are conditions under which it is not prudent to travel on a given road with a school bus, including, but not limited to, deep unplowed snow, ice, flooding, and washouts. Typically, adverse conditions include reported road conditions where travel is not recommended.

Bus route or **busing** refers to the transportation of students on a school bus operated by, or contracted by, LSKYSD to convey students between home and school.

Local conditions are road or weather conditions as experienced by bus drivers or school principals, independent of reported conditions.

Reported road conditions are provided by the Ministry of Transportation's Highway Hotline.

Reported weather conditions are provided by Environment Canada's website.

Severe weather is weather in which it is not prudent to transport students, given heightened risks to safety, including, but not limited to, extreme wind chill, poor visibility, and winds that risk toppling a school bus. Typically, severe weather includes reported weather conditions with extreme warnings.

Transportation refers to the conveyance of any student, and LSKYSD staff are accountable for that student's safety. Examples include, but are not limited to, busing, volunteers driving students to and from extracurricular activities, and the use of a bus or a rented vehicle for curricular or extracurricular purposes.

Roles & Responsibilities

Service Providers

- authorized to cancel individual routes, when the conditions of any of clauses 1 through 3 below are met
- responsible for the safety of students travelling to and from schools

School Principals or designates

- authorized to cancel transportation of students within their school attendance boundaries, based on local conditions and in consultation with the service provider and superintendent
- accountable for the maintenance of the list of billets and for the safe transportation of students to their billets
- accountable for the safety of students under the care of LSKYSD staff

Transportation Coordinator

- accountable for the operational monitoring, routing of buses, KPI tracking, and safety compliance, in a manner that meets the mandates of transportation services

Procedures

Conditions for Cancelling Busing

1. When considering extreme cold warnings, busing shall be cancelled:
    a. for rural routes, if the wind chill temperature is at or below -40°C either measured at 6:30 a.m. the morning of or forecasted the night before; and
    b. for urban routes, if the wind chill temperature is at or below -45°C either measured at 7:00 a.m. the morning of or forecasted the night before.

2. Decisions regarding bus service cancellations due to extreme cold shall be based on weather data available from the Environment Canada website. The following locations shall be used when assessing conditions for each individual bus route.
    a. North Battleford for busing to Battleford, North Battleford, Cando, Maymont and Cut Knife;
    b. Scott for busing to Wilkie and Unity;
    c. Spiritwood for busing to Hafford, Leoville, Medstead and Spiritwood;
    d. Bodo for busing to Kerrobert, Macklin and Luseland

3. When considering adverse road conditions, busing shall be cancelled if a portion of the route, which cannot easily be avoided, is marked as either, *travel not recommended* or *closed* as per the Highway Hotline website at 6:30 a.m. for rural routes or 7:00 a.m. for urban routes on the morning of.

4. When cancelling busing due to other forms of severe weather or adverse road conditions, the safety of students and staff shall be paramount. Decisions may be made locally, on a route-by-route basis, by those most familiar with current conditions, including service provider drivers and school principals in consultation with the Superintendent of Learning. Given the dynamic nature of weather and road conditions, cancellation decisions may occur at any time when safety concerns arise.

Communication of Cancellations

5. All parties shall ensure that communications are completed promptly to support the safety of students and staff and to provide families with timely information.

a. The service provider, transportation coordinator, and school principal shall all be informed of any bus route cancellations. Documentation supporting the cancellation shall be communicated between transportation coordinator and service provider.
b. The service provider shall promptly update any platforms communicating bus route status with the public. The service provider shall also inform families of route cancellations as soon as is reasonably possible.

6. If the service provider has begun their bus routes, they shall communicate and coordinate with families if they are unable to complete all or part of their route due to local adverse road conditions or severe weather. At all times, the service provider shall balance the intent to support good attendance with the need to ensure the safety of the students in their care.
    a. It is the responsibility of the service provider to communicate with families in whichever method is most effective, efficient, and expedient.

Afternoon Busing

7. Afternoon busing shall not run if morning busing has been cancelled, even if local roads or weather conditions improve over the day.

8. Afternoon busing may be cancelled when reported or local road or weather conditions worsen over the school day. The transportation coordinator, school principals, and service providers shall strive to cancel busing no later than one hour before the end of school to give staff and families time to prepare and make alternate arrangements. Cancellations made within one hour of the end of school must be the result of conditions worsening within one hour of the end of school.

9. In the event of worsening road or weather conditions, afternoon buses may be cancelled but shall not run earlier than the regularly scheduled time. Families of students affected by bus cancellations may arrange alternate transportation at their own expense. If this is not possible, affected students shall be transported to their designated billets. Typically, transportation to a billet shall be arranged by the billet or the student's family at their own expense.

Cancellations and Transportation not for Bus Routes

10. When busing is cancelled due to severe weather or adverse road conditions, all transportation of students shall also cancelled. This includes, but is not limited to, transportation by any means for extra-curricular activities, in-car portions of driver's education classes, and travel for field trips and other curricular experiences. However, there are exceptions.
    a. Unless local conditions pose a particular danger, students shall be transported to their billets.
    b. If morning busing has been cancelled but conditions significantly improve, the principal may allow for transportation of students for curricular or extra-curricular activities. This shall not apply to bus routes. The principal shall inform the transportation coordinator if such a decision is made.

Related

4.31 Emergency Closure of Schools
Transportation of Students - Special Use of Buses protocol *(internal document)*
Severe Weather protocol (*internal document*)