

AP 1603: Emergency Student Dismissal and/or School Closure

Background

The Superintendent may close schools by reason of weather emergencies, or as ordered by the school medical officer, or for other causes that might endanger the health or safety of the students that are in alignment with [School Act](#), 90 - Inspection and Closure of School.

Procedures

1. Schools will be open for students and staff according to the annual school calendar as approved by the Ministry of Education and Child Care.
2. Emergency school closure shall be approved only by the Superintendent or designate.
3. If the health and/or safety of students and/or staff is endangered, the Superintendent of Schools/CEO may:
 - 3.1 close (a) school(s) temporarily;
 - 3.2 dismiss students in emergency situations; and,
 - 3.3 cancel district transportation services.
4. The Superintendent shall reschedule the re-opening of school on the day of closure subject to:
 - 4.1 an improvement in, or elimination of, the conditions for the closures; and,
 - 4.2 sufficient time to schedule services and re-open the school(s).
5. Emergency school closure shall be approved and confirmed only on a day-to-day basis.
6. The principal shall report failures of power, plumbing, heating, ventilation systems or other failures of a nature to be detrimental to the health or safety of students and staff to the Superintendent of Schools or appropriate Director.
7. The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Operations and the principal, will make the decision to close the school, if deemed appropriate.
8. The procedures to be followed will be reviewed with the principal.
9. Transportation Services:
 - 9.1 A decision on the non-operation of school buses in the morning for the reason of inclement weather will be made prior to 6:00 A.M., whenever possible.

- 9.2 The decision as to the non-operation of school buses in inclement weather will be made by the Superintendent in consultation with the Director of Operations or designate;
 - 9.3 The Director of Operations or designate will consult with the RCMP, police, and the Highways Department, wherever possible, prior to making a recommendation to the Superintendent.
 - 9.4 Non-operation of the school buses and closing of the school(s) will be announced on local radio stations prior to 6:45 A.M., whenever possible.
 - 9.5 The Superintendent shall authorize such announcements and also advise other appropriate individuals.
 - 9.6 Non-operation of school buses does not imply closure of schools.
10. Presence of Employees
- 10.1 Employees are not excused from duties when school buses do not operate or an early dismissal occurs.
 - 10.2 If a school, or district office, is not suitable for the staff to remain, the principal or person in charge will make alternate arrangements for the staff with the Superintendent.
 - 10.3 If an employee, using their discretion, decides not to report for duty during inclement weather, the absence will be considered a discretionary day, or vacation, in accordance with respective collective agreements, policy, and administrative procedure.
 - 10.3.1 This section does not apply to those employees performing critical services - e.g., snow removal crews, transportation drivers, maintenance personnel and caretaking staff.
 - 10.3.2 If critical services employee is unable to get to their work site, they shall notify their immediate supervisor so that alternate transportation can be arranged.
11. When the Superintendent has determined that the schools are closed and essentially not accessible, the principal has the responsibility for making arrangements to have an employee responsible, given the nature of the emergent situation, at the school site to implement school procedures for emergency school closure.
12. Schools, or school offices, closed during the time of an employee's usual hours of work may be re-opened and employees shall be notified no later than 11:00 a.m., whenever possible, of the same day that they will be required to report to work or work a shift if

the shift occurs after the reopening and resumption of services.

13. Each school principal will have a procedure in place to evacuate the school and contact parents in the event of an emergency or temporary school closure, and the school principal will circulate the evacuation procedure to parents.
14. The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Operations or designate, will make a decision for early dismissal of schools and the early return of school buses.
 - 14.1 The principal of the school concerned will be consulted when it is a single school.
 - 14.2 When the early dismissal is District-wide, consultation will be held with the Police or RCMP and the Highways Department, wherever possible.
15. When all district schools are temporarily closed or dismissed early:
 - 15.1 School principals will implement school-based emergency procedures;
 - 15.2 The Director of Operations or designate will implement appropriate procedures with the transportation staff;
 - 15.3 The Superintendent or designate will arrange for the media to be contacted and state the reasons for the closure plus expectations re resumption of services;
 - 15.4 The Director of Operations or designate will implement appropriate procedures with maintenance staff to ensure the safety and security of district buildings.