

Topic	Number of Pages	Date Approved
5.2 Inclement Weather Causing School Bus Delays and/or Cancellations	2	December 2009 Updated September 2010

Policy Statement

STS will work co-operatively with the bus companies to advise of transportation delays/cancellations affecting any portion of the service area as a result of inclement weather.

The deterioration of weather conditions during the course of the day may result in transportation services being rescheduled or cancelled during school hours. STS will work cooperatively with the bus companies and the School Boards should the need arise to reschedule or cancel service affecting any portion of the service area.

School bus delays/cancellations will be posted at www.mybigyellowbus.ca. Delay and cancellation information is sent to local TV and radio stations, who may elect to broadcast the information. Parents/guardians are responsible for knowing their weather zone and how to access bus delays/cancellation information on the website.

Procedure

The following procedure details delays/cancellations prior to the start of the service day, noting these decisions are typically made by 6:30 am at the latest.

- STS will work cooperatively with a Weather Committee comprised of local bus operators located in pre-determined geographic regions.
- STS and the Weather Committee will structure geographic regions to avoid unnecessary disruptions for students where it is possible to do so, noting that occasionally, because of where the route starts, a bus route may be delayed/cancelled even when weather conditions elsewhere on the route seem suitable.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ultimately decide if it is safe for their student to travel to the bus stop and/or attend school in times of inclement weather.

In the event of a delay, it will last for 2 hours. After a two hour delay, one of two events will occur:

- service will commence, with scheduled pick up and arrival times adjusted by two hours and factoring in weather conditions, which may impact the ability of the vehicle to adhere to a regular schedule.
- service will be cancelled. (After a delay, if transportation is then cancelled, no afternoon transportation will be provided. Parents/guardians assume responsibility for private arrangements in this circumstance.)

Procedure, Continued

The following procedure details the coordination of early transportation arrangements as a result of the deterioration of weather conditions during the course of the school day, noting these decisions are typically made by 11:30 am:

- STS and the Weather Committee (comprised of bus operators in designated geographic areas) may determine through the course of the day that afternoon service should start early or be cancelled if weather conditions are deteriorating.
- STS staff will contact the designated School Board official for the respective School Board, who is then responsible for the appropriate communication within the respective organization.
- STS will work cooperatively with the bus companies and the school principal to make the necessary arrangements.
- In such an event, transportation arrangements will be made as expeditiously as possible, noting that, typically the elementary panel will be removed first and prior to the secondary panel.
- When the buses arrive at the school for events of this nature, the vehicle is unable to wait beyond regular boarding time (10 minutes).
- In the event that it is determined that afternoon bus service can not run at regular dismissal time or by 6:00 pm at the latest, then STS will so advise the designated School Board official, who will advise the principal and other appropriate parties within the School Board and parents/guardians that all students will remain at the school for the night, noting parents may elect to make private travel arrangements.

STS is responsible for:

- working cooperatively with the bus company(ies) to ensure that decisions are made in a timely manner;
- contacting the affected bus company(ies) and reviewing route sharing to advise any partner School Boards which may be impacted;
- having a contact list of appropriate telephone numbers for use in emergency situations;
- ensuring that the bus companies update the appropriate communications tools (website) for cancellation and delay information.

The School Board is responsible for:

- deciding whether or not school facilities are open or closed and the related media communications;
- contacting STS immediately to advise of the above, noting closure decisions should be made by 6:00 am whenever possible.
- If buses are cancelled for a school which is 100% bussed, the school is deemed to be closed.
- school principal/designate is responsible for contacting all parents/guardians of the necessary transportation changes in the event of early dismissal due to inclement weather.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- Being the ultimate decision maker to determine whether or not their student travels to/from a bus stop in the event of inclement weather.
- Knowing inclement weather procedures and where to locate information on bus delays/cancellations.
- Ensuring their student is dressed appropriately for inclement weather conditions as buses may experience further delays on route.
- Maintaining up to date phone numbers with the school for use in emergencies.