

Procedure Title	Inclement Weather		
Date of Issue	November 20, 2007	Related Policy	BP 3801-D
Revision Dates	February 20, 2013, September 11, 2013; August 31, 2016; February 8, 2017; March 6, 2019	Related Forms	AF 2807
Review Date		Originator	Administrative Council
References			
BP and AP 6810-D "Safe Arrival"; AF 6813 "Student Health/Safety Information and Consent to Release"; TCP-B009 "Transporting Students During Inclement Weather"			

1.0 RATIONALE

- 1.1 To establish a procedure for schools and Bluewater worksites (Education Centre and Maintenance Shop), concerning inclement weather and staff duty to report.
- 1.2 The safety of students and employees during periods of inclement weather is a primary concern of Bluewater District School Board (BWDSB).
- 1.3 Bluewater District School Board will keep schools and other worksites open during inclement weather except in extraordinary circumstances as determined by the director of education, or designate, in consultation with appropriate staff and authorities.
- 1.4 The expectation is that all employees will be at their place of employment during the working hours defined by respective agreements, or terms of employment or other accepted practices. However, it is recognized that during periods of inclement weather, or when a worksite is closed, the ability of an employee to fulfill this expectation can be compromised. Employees are not expected to travel to a worksite when access roads are closed.
- 1.5 When inclement weather results in significant loss of instructional time, principals will consult with their area superintendent of education to determine appropriate next steps.

2.0 PROCEDURE

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 When schools or worksites are closed under the authority of the director of education, or designate, staff at those sites are not expected to report for duty. Refer to section 2.2 for individual employee group inclement weather day reporting procedures.
- 2.1.2 When schools or worksites remain open, staff are expected to make every reasonable effort to report to their permanent work site or alternate site unless, as individuals, they determine that travel is unsafe.
- 2.1.3 In the event that the board's transportation services are disrupted, wholly or partially, by inclement weather, but schools/worksites remain open, the expectation that staff attend at work remains in effect.
- 2.1.4 Where travel to employees' worksites can be done safely, employees are expected to report to their regular workplace for the portion of the day that reflects their current full time equivalent (FTE) status. Refer to section 2.2.
- 2.1.5 Reasonable lateness on inclement weather days will be considered acceptable.

- 2.1.6 Parents will be reminded each school year that it is their responsibility to determine whether it is safe for a student to be sent or driven to school in inclement weather.
- 2.1.7 Principals will work with school councils to ensure that parents are aware that students who can get to school safely are expected to attend when regular classes are disrupted by inclement weather.
- 2.1.8 When schools remain open it is the principals' responsibility to ensure that there is adequate staff.
- 2.1.9 Meaningful activities will be developed for students who are able to reach the school safely.
- 2.1.10 Principals, managers, and supervisors shall ensure that all employees are familiar with this policy and related procedures.

2.2 Staff Reporting Process

- 2.2.1 a) Members of OSSTF TBU, OSSTF OPT, OSSTF ESP, and OSSTF PSSP will meet the following expectations:
 - i. When schools or worksites remain open, staff are expected to make every reasonable effort to report to their permanent work site unless, as individuals, they determine that travel is unsafe.
 - ii. Employees who are unable to attend their regular worksite will inform their administrator/supervisor.
 - iii. If travel to a regular worksite is not possible, the employee will attend the alternate worksite that was identified in the fall and travel to this alternate worksite unless, as individuals, they determine that travel is unsafe. The employee will report to the administrator of the alternate worksite, who will have the employee sign-in and sign-out of the building using administrative form AF 2807 "Inclement Weather Alternate Location Sign-In/Out".
- b) ETFO Bluewater Local members will meet the following expectations:
 - i. When schools and worksites remain open, and where travel is safe, members are expected to make reasonable efforts to report to their permanent worksite;
 - ii. When a member determines that it is unsafe to travel they will notify their administrator. The member will then determine if it is safe to travel to their identified alternate location. If it is safe to do so, the member will notify the administrator of the alternate school by telephone by 8:30 a.m., including a telephone message left at the school, of their ability to travel;
 - iii. Members are responsible for monitoring their phones on a regular basis for communications from administrators.
 - 1. Administrators of the alternate schools will notify available members if there is a staffing need in the alternate worksite due to teachers' absences because of inclement weather.

Administrators will determine their staffing needs at the alternate location to ensure there are appropriate numbers of staff to supervise the number of students present, and will ensure that there is meaningful work for all reporting staff.

- c) CUPE members will meet the following expectations:
 - i. All custodians are expected to report for work at their home school.
 - ii. Should the principal close a custodian's home school custodial staff at that location are expected to report to the closest open school from the custodian's residence or home school location.
 - iii. Custodians are to remain home if the appropriate authorities (OPP or local police forces) close highways or roads between their residence and their home school or closest school.

- iv. Principals at the schools may decide, during the workday, to send students home due to impending road closures or other exigent circumstances. Should this occur, custodial staff should consult with their plant operations supervisor for direction
 - v. Custodians who choose not to report to work due to inclement weather may do so, but the day will be deducted from their five personal days, vacation time, or taken as a leave with no pay.
 - vi. During inclement weather, or days of service interruption, it is the head custodian's responsibility to report the status of their staff; e.g., working at home school, working at alternate school, home due to road closure, etc.
 - vii. The head custodian must report to the plant services office by phone or email.
- d) Non-union employees will meet the following expectations:
- i. When schools or worksites remain open, non-union employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to report to their permanent work site when travel is considered safe, unless, as individuals, they determine that travel is unsafe.
 - ii. Non-union employees, who are unable to attend their regular worksite for the whole day, or part of the day, will inform their supervisor.
 - iii. If travel to their regular worksite is not possible, the non-union employee will coordinate with their supervisor to establish an alternate work location.
- e) Elementary occasional teachers on short-term assignments will adhere to the following, as per collective agreement Article 12.03.02 "When it appears that inclement weather may close down the school, the short term occasional teacher on a work assignment should verify the work assignment, if any, for that day."
- Note:** Due to the difficulty of contacting school offices in the morning, verifying short-term occasional work assignment is a joint teacher-administration responsibility.
- f) Secondary occasional teachers on short-term assignments will adhere to the following as per collective agreement Article 14.02.04 "When it appears that inclement weather may close down the school, the Short Term Occasional Teacher on a work assignment should verify the work assignment for that day."
- g) Long-term occasional teachers are expected to designate an alternate location if one is closer to home and follow procedures consistent with permanent teachers in section 2.2.1.

2.3 Bus Cancellation

- 2.3.1 Bluewater District School Board is a member of the Student Transportation Services Consortium of Grey-Bruce; bus cancellations will follow the process and expectations outlined in consortium procedure TCP-B009 "Transporting Students during Inclement Weather".
- 2.3.2 Schools within Bluewater District School Board are separated, by family of schools, into inclement weather zones. A meeting for each zone, that includes school principals and bus operators, must be held by October 25 of each year to prepare a plan of action that sets out procedures to be followed during inclement weather.
- 2.3.3 Area superintendents are to receive the plan of action by November 15 of each year.
- 2.3.4 As per consortium procedure TCP-B009 "Transporting Students during Inclement Weather", bus operators, with input from the roads departments and weather forecasts, will assess the weather and road conditions to determine if conditions are safe/unsafe for bus travel. Final decisions to cancel buses will be made by bus operator(s), who will then initiate the communication process for cancellations (i.e. contacting the principal(s) impacted). An internal communication system is used to provide electronic notification to local media and a public website.

2.4 Process for Closing Schools and Bluewater Worksites

- 2.4.1 Any decision respecting the closure of schools, due to inclement weather will be determined as early as possible.
- 2.4.2 In the event of inclement weather, the area superintendent in consultation with the principal will determine if the school needs to be closed. To facilitate the consultation, the principal will contact the local authorities to determine road conditions, and will also determine if there will be adequate staff available.
- 2.4.3 If the school is closed, the principal will utilize the internal communication system to provide electronic notification to local media and a public website about the closure.
- 2.4.4 When schools are closed due to inclement weather, events scheduled to take place at these sites are also cancelled.
- 2.4.5 In the event of school closure during the day, students will not be released from school until their parents/designates have been notified.
- 2.4.6 To ensure student safety during periods of inclement weather, where it is determined that students cannot be transported home by bus, the principal will ensure that the section pertaining to "Emergency Billeting" on form AF 6813 "Student Health/Safety Information and Consent to Release" has been completed.
- 2.4.7 If billeting of students is not possible due to road closures, principals will follow their schools emergency plan, which is to include arrangements that provide for staff and students who may be unable to leave the school.

2.5 Student Athletics

- 2.5.1 To ensure that there is a consistent approach to athletic participation by schools during inclement weather, the following expectations apply:
 - i. When inclement weather conditions occur, resulting in the cancellation of buses, it is expected that all scheduled Bluewater Elementary Sports Council and Bluewater Athletic Association games/competitions will also be cancelled.
 - ii. When buses have been cancelled due to inclement weather, student athletes are not expected to attend practice in impacted schools.

2.6 Professional Activity Days

- 2.6.1 In the event of inclement weather, there will be a system announcement regarding impacted professional activity day activities. The staff reporting processes outlined in section 2.2 would apply.