



SCHOOL DISTRICT No.69 (QUALICUM)

Inclement Weather Procedures Reminder for Parents:

During this time of season, inclement weather may affect the safety and welfare of students. When snowfall or power outages have the potential to cause school closures, classes to be postponed, or School District bus services to be disrupted, alerts will be posted as quickly as possible on the district website (as power permits) and sent out to families via SchoolMessenger as phone and email messages. The information will also be forwarded to media outlets.

Before a decision is made about whether buses will be running, or schools will remain open or be closed, the Superintendent consults with the General Manager of Operations. These administrators take the current and forecasted weather into consideration, and are in communication with Highways Maintenance, our own crews, and other community members who can verify local conditions. District staff will be considering current road and weather conditions, and also whether schools have power. Freezing weather overnight may mean that conditions are hazardous for travel.

It is our intention to make decisions on whether or not buses or schools are operating by 6:15 am, and to have these decisions communicated to local media outlets by 6:30 am. Communication is by telephone contact, followed up by an e-mail message.

Parents/Guardians should continue to monitor their local media for any weather-related updates and the potential impact on school district operations (i.e. bus operations or school closures).

Parents/Guardians are also reminded to keep battery-operated radios handy and land line telephones plugged in to prepare for power outages. Since weather conditions can be very different in the various communities the make up our school district, we recommend parents/guardians exercise their judgement based on their own local circumstance when making the decision whether to send or drive their children to school. If a decision is made by the District to keep schools open but parents/guardians are concerned about safety issues, they are welcome to keep their children home.

See also attached Administrative Procedure: Emergency Closure of Schools (Student)

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 69 (QUALICUM)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS - STUDENTS

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Purpose

The Board of Education has the responsibility, under the *School Act*, to keep District schools in session for all students and staff according to the annual School Calendar established by the Ministry of Education. However, the Board of Education also recognizes that the health and safety of staff and students is of paramount importance and recognizes that schools may have to be closed temporarily at times for any of several reasons, including the following:

- Inclement weather
- Power outage
- Failure of heating or water services
- Emergency health issues
- Other emergency situations.

The Superintendent of Schools, or designate, has the authority to close schools by reason of weather emergencies or for other causes that might endanger the health or safety of students and staff.

School Closure

There are occasions when the General Manager of Operations, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, may decide not to run the morning bus routes due to hazardous conditions. Every effort will be made to make that decision no later than 6:15 a.m.

Changes in bus operations or school closures shall be communicated to the following media outlets, which usually make such announcements between 6:30 and 8:00 a.m.:

- CIBH Radio ("The Beach" – 88.5 FM) Parksville
- CHPQ Radio ("The Lounge" – 99.9 VM) Parksville
- CHWF Radio ("The Wolf" – 106.9 FM) Nanaimo
- CKWV Radio ("The Wave" - 102.3 FM) Nanaimo
- CKNW (980 AM) Vancouver
- CBC Radio One (690 AM) Vancouver
- CHEK TV News Victoria
- Parksville/Qualicum Beach News (PQB News)

Prior to the end of October each year, parents will be reminded through school newsletters of the procedures that will be implemented in the event of emergent conditions.

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Emergency Early Dismissal

Each school shall have an established plan by which parents can be notified in the event of an early closure.

In those situations during the school day where an emergent situation arises or weather conditions deteriorate significantly enough that a Principal or designate has concerns for local road conditions in his/her school zone, the Principal or designate should contact the Superintendent of Schools. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools to notify the Principal or designate as soon as it becomes apparent that school emergency closure will be necessary.

When an emergent situation occurs after school has begun it may be prudent for students to be dismissed and, therefore, staff will activate their plan to contact parents. On such occasions the Superintendent of Schools shall activate communication which notify parents that schools will be closed early and some or all bus schedules have been advanced.

If a school bus driver is unable to complete his/her normal bus run, the driver will so advise the General Manager of Operations. After discussion with the General Manager of Operations the driver will either return the students to their home school or deliver them to an alternate location identified by the General Manager of Operations. Parents will be advised of such route changes either by direct telephone contact or other means.