

Inclement Weather – Transportation Cancellations and Emergency School Closures	
Adopted: December 15, 2009	Last Reviewed/Revised: January 2, 2023
Next Scheduled Review: 2025-2026	
Associated Policies & Procedures: II-24 Home to School Student Transportation VI-39 Inclement Weather Safety VI-58 Parent Notification System II-07 The School Day (Daily Sessions) - Elementary and Secondary II-33 Safe Arrival at School Program VI-18 Safe Arrival at School Program II-26 Managing Student Risk in Interschool Sports	

Purpose

To provide the process and requirements regarding the cancellation of transportation services and closing of schools as a result of inclement weather conditions.

Application and Scope

This policy applies to all schools within the jurisdiction of the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) and to all eligible students served by Halton Student Transportation Services (HSTS).

References

[HSTS Procedure HS-4-006 - Inclement Weather](#)

[HSTS Procedure HS-4-007 - School Closure](#)

Principles

1. It is the responsibility of the Halton Student Transportation Services (HSTS) to cancel transportation to schools as a result of inclement weather, in accordance with *HSTS Procedure HS-4-006, Inclement Weather*.
2. When transportation services have been cancelled due to inclement weather, system schools may remain open at the discretion of the Director of Education (or designate).

3. It is the responsibility of the Director of Education (or designate) to determine whether or not to close schools as the result of inclement weather.

Requirements

1. Transportation Cancellation due to Inclement Weather:

- 1.1. In accordance with HSTS Inclement Weather Procedure (HS-4-006):
 - 1.1.1. By 6:00 a.m. HSTS shall inform the Directors of Education (or designates) at the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) and Halton District School Board (HDSB) whether school bus transportation is cancelled.
 - 1.1.2. By 6:30 a.m. HSTS shall inform the media of the transportation cancellation.
- 1.2. The Director of Education (or designate) shall contact the Manager, Strategic Communications Services (or designate) to relay the information regarding transportation cancellation.
- 1.3. The Manager, Strategic Communications Services (or designate) shall:
 - 1.3.1. Post the information on the HCDSB's public website and the applicable school websites;
 - 1.3.2. Share the information on the HCDSB's Twitter and Instagram accounts;
 - 1.3.3. Send an email to parents/guardians through the parent/guardian notification system to notify of transportation cancellation;
 - 1.3.4. Advise school principals to inform their parent/guardian communities of the cancellation of any unique activities for their respective school communities, as appropriate (e.g., secondary exams, parent/guardian information meetings, sports events, etc.);
 - 1.3.5. Advise all appropriate staff (senior staff, principals, receptionist, etc.) of the cancellation and how the information has been shared.
- 1.4. If a bus route or transportation services are cancelled in the morning, this decision remains in effect for the entire school day and includes all field trips. It is at the discretion of the parent or guardian to send their children to school when transportation is cancelled; if they choose to do so, it is then their responsibility to provide transportation to and from school for their child(ren).
- 1.5. When the weather deteriorates during the day, while all the students are at school, transportation services will maintain their regular schedule.

The decision to send students home early may be made by the Director of Education (or designate) after discussion with the General Manager of HSTS (or designate). If this becomes necessary, schools will dismiss students in accordance with the direction provided by parents/guardian on the Family Information Form – School Emergency Closure.

2. School Closure due to Inclement Weather:

- 2.1. In accordance with HSTS School Closure Operating Procedure (HS-4-007):
 - 2.1.1. By 6:00 a.m. HSTS shall inform the Directors of Education (or designates) at the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) and Halton District School Board (HDSB) whether school bus transportation is cancelled.
- 2.2. The Director of Education (or designate) shall relay to HSTS the decision regarding school and/or HCDSB office closure.
- 2.3. In accordance with HSTS Procedure HS-4-007 School Closure Operating Procedure, by 6:30 a.m., HSTS shall inform the media of the transportation cancellation and school and/or HCDSB office closures.
- 2.4. The Director of Education (or designate) shall contact the Manager, Strategic Communications Services (or designate) to relay the information regarding school and/or HCDSB office closures.
- 2.5. The Manager, Strategic Communications Services (or designate) shall:
 - 2.5.1. Post the information on the HCDSB's public website and all school websites;
 - 2.5.2. Share the information on the HCDSB's Twitter and Instagram accounts;
 - 2.5.3. Send an email to parents/guardians through the parent/guardian notification system to notify of school closure;
 - 2.5.4. Advise school principals to inform their parent/guardian communities of the cancellation of any unique activities for their respective school communities, as appropriate (e.g. secondary exams, parent information meetings, sports events, etc.);
 - 2.5.5. Send an email to all staff to advise of school and HCDSB Office closure;
 - 2.5.6. Contact the Manager of IT Services to have the HCDSB's auto attendant phone message updated.
- 2.7. When the weather deteriorates during the day, while all the students are at school, transportation services will maintain their regular schedule.

The decision to send students home early may be made by the Director of Education (or designate) in consultation with HSTS. If this becomes necessary, schools will dismiss students in accordance with the direction provided by parents/guardians on the Family Information Form – School Emergency Closure.

3. After School Hours Activities and Community Use of Schools Activities:

- 3.1. Throughout the day, weather conditions will be monitored to determine whether schools will remain open for after school hours and community use of school activities.
- 3.2. If weather conditions worsen, the notice on the HCDSB's public website will be updated, as appropriate, by Strategic Communications staff.

- 3.3. Strategic Communications staff will advise the media of any cancellations to after-school-hours activities and community use of schools' activities through a public service announcement.

4. Emergency Contact Information

- 4.1. The Inclement Weather Emergency Contact Information shall be kept up to date and provided to all appropriate staff.

5. Expectations of Staff:

- 5.1. When transportation services have been cancelled due to inclement weather, but schools remain open and operational:
 - 5.1.1. Teachers are expected to arrive at their schools as soon as possible and to conduct appropriate instructional/review activities or assume other duties deemed appropriate by the principal.
 - 5.1.2. School support staff will also arrive at their school as soon as possible and report to the principal for assignment.
- 5.2. The cancellation of transportation services does not mean the schools are closed. If no closures are reported, staff are expected to arrive at their school as soon as possible and report to the principal.
- 5.3. Only extenuating and compelling circumstances, indicated in writing to the Superintendent, Human Resources Services, within forty-eight (48) hours may be accepted as a reason for not reporting for duties. All employees who report their absences as Inclement Weather will have their situation reviewed by Human Resources Services. A determination will then be made whether the absence will be granted with or without pay.
- 5.4. In the event that the HCDSB announces a system closure due to inclement weather, staff need not report to any HCDSB location.
- 5.5. Transportation cancellations, school closures and/or a system closure will be posted on the HCDSB's website.

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Administrative Council

AUTHORIZED BY: _____
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board