

Public Schools Branch

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS	
<i>Policy Section</i> Finance and Facilities	<i>Procedure Number</i> 205.1
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<i>Replaces:</i> PSB 205.1, School Cancellations, August 21, 2018	

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Public Schools Branch (PSB) considers the safety of students and employees to be of primary concern when making decisions related to a school cancellation, delay, or early dismissal. Such decisions may be due to inclement weather or exceptional circumstances.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Early dismissal – The release of students from school or employees from work prior to the end of the school/work day.
- 2.2 Early dismissal plan – The process identified on the Student Information Form to indicate the departure plan for a student in the case of an early dismissal from school.
- 2.3 Exceptional circumstances – Circumstances which occur that are beyond our reasonable control (e.g. power outages, gas/oil spill, heating issues, water issues).
- 2.4 Inclement weather – Hazardous or potentially hazardous weather or poor road conditions.
- 2.5 One-hour delay – Bussing and classes operate as usual except that the start time is one hour later than normal.
- 2.6 Local level meeting – A meeting where all meeting participants work in the same school, Family of Schools or in the same office area/worksites.
- 2.7 PSB level meeting – A meeting where meeting participants work in different Families of Schools or office areas/worksites.
- 2.8 Casual employee/Substitute teacher – A person employed to work on a day-to-day basis as required by the Public Schools Branch.
- 2.9 Local Area Shutdown – Where there are no classes for students and no work for employees at a particular school, family of schools and PSB worksites within that area.
- 2.10 System-Wide Shutdown – Where there are no classes for students and no work for employees within the entire PSB.

3.0 DELAYS/CANCELLATION

- 3.1 Weather-related decisions are made in consideration of weather patterns, forecasts, and existing and expected road/travel conditions (**Appendix A**).
- 3.2 School cancellations due to inclement weather will be announced on local radio stations, posted on the PSB website (www.gov.pe.ca/edu/psb), and posted on PSB social media.
- 3.3 In the event of an early morning cancellation, an announcement will be made by 7:00 a.m. whenever possible.
- 3.4 Due to varying weather patterns throughout the province, a delay or cancellation may only effect one or more family of schools. In that event, an announcement will identify the family of schools affected (**Appendix B**).
- 3.5 If a decision on a cancellation cannot be made by 7:00 a.m., a one-hour delay will be announced with a further announcement by 8:00 a.m.
- 3.6 School bus drivers, regardless of the time of year, are required to use their professional judgement regarding whether or not to travel on some roads.
- 3.7 Where a driver deems they cannot safely travel on a road, the driver shall immediately notify Transportation Services. Parents will be notified as soon as reasonably possible.
- 3.8 Recognizing that weather conditions may delay the arrival of teachers and support staff to school, students should not be dropped off or otherwise sent to school without ensuring that staff are available to provide adequate supervision.
- 3.9 A delay or cancellation may also occur because of an exceptional circumstance. In this case, the PSB will follow the same announcement process noted above for weather related decisions.

4.0 EARLY DISMISSAL

- 4.1 If the PSB dismisses students early, the PSB will communicate the early dismissal decision directly to the school(s) (administrators and admin assistants) and announce the decision via radio, website, and social media.
- 4.2 Parents are responsible for communicating a student's Early Dismissal Plan to the school on the Student Information Form, which is distributed to parents every September. In the event of an early dismissal, the school will follow the Early Dismissal Plan.
- 4.3 Due to the emergency nature of early dismissals, schools are NOT expected to contact individual parents.
- 4.4 The principal or designate will remain at the school for a reasonable period of time after students have been dismissed to support the dismissal and transportation process.

5.0 CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 When classes are not cancelled and a parent is concerned about inclement weather, the parent is expected to use their discretion to decide if their student should attend school.
- 5.2 A student who is absent for weather-related/safety reasons, when classes have not been cancelled, will be considered 'absent without consequence'. The parent is expected to report the absence and the reason to the school. Schools should enter this type of absence in SAS as Absence-Board.

6.0 USE OF FACILITIES

- 6.1 In the event of a school cancellation or early dismissal, all extra-curricular and community events for that day/evening are cancelled.
- 6.2 If inclement weather or other exceptional circumstances are expected after the school day has ended, the PSB may cancel student-related activities for the remainder of the day. Schools will be directed to convey the message to students, staff and parents. Notification will also be posted on the PSB website and social media. Adult-related activities may proceed at the discretion of the school principal.
- 6.3 If a student activity is planned for a non-school day (PD Day, weekend, etc.) and there is a forecast of inclement weather/unsafe road conditions for that day(s), the principal or designate is responsible for determining if the activity (home or away) should proceed as scheduled. If in doubt, the principal or designate should consult with the Director of the Public Schools Branch or designate.

7.0 EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEES

- 7.1 An employee working in a school or family of schools that is impacted by a Local Area Shutdown or a System-Wide Shutdown is not expected to be at work.
- 7.2 Should an employee choose to go to a worksite that is closed, there should be no expectation of snow removal, salting, etc.
- 7.3 Where classes have been cancelled but a Local Area Shutdown or System Wide-Shutdown has NOT been issued,
 - a) Prince Edward Island Teacher Federation members shall follow the PEITF Memorandum of Agreement;
 - b) Education Assistants, Youth Service Workers, Student Attendants and Workplace Assistants shall follow the CUPE 3260 Collective Agreement and record the time as per Schedule F of the agreement;
 - c) Administrative support, custodial, maintenance, UPSE and PSB Branch-based employees shall follow the direction given to provincial government offices in their area, as per **Appendix C**.
 - d) Bus drivers are not expected to report to work unless otherwise notified.

8.0 SCHEDULED MEETINGS OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) SESSIONS

- 8.1 *PSB Level Meetings or PD when students are scheduled to be in class:*
 - 8.1.1 If classes are delayed or cancelled in one or more family of schools due to weather related travel conditions, all PSB level meetings/PD sessions are cancelled.
 - 8.1.2 If there is a PSB Local Area-Shutdown in any area, all PSB level meetings and PD sessions are cancelled.
- 8.2 *PSB Level Meetings or PD when students are not scheduled to be in class:*
 - 8.2.1 On a day when students are not scheduled to be in school, the PSB will not make a radio announcement in the event of a delay, cancellation or early dismissal due to inclement weather. Meetings and PD sessions will follow the direction for provincial government offices in that local area.

8.3 *Local Level Meetings or PD*

8.3.1 When a local level meeting is scheduled and the meeting is not being held in an area that is impacted by a provincial government office delay, cancellation or early dismissal announcement, that meeting may proceed provided it does not involve an employee who works in an area which has been impacted by a provincial government office delay, cancellation or early dismissal.

8.4 The cancellation of a meeting not covered by 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 will be determined by the host employee.

9.0 CASUAL EMPLOYEES/SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

9.1 A casual employee/substitute teacher shall be paid for the time they have been booked to work when their work has been cancelled after they have reported to work and their shift has started.

9.2 A casual employee/substitute teacher shall not be paid for the time they have been booked to work when their work has been cancelled prior to the start of their shift, unless there are contrary provisions in a respective collective agreement.

10.0 APPENDIX

10.1 Appendix A: How Weather Related Cancellations, Delays, and Early Dismissals Decisions are Made

10.1 Appendix B: Public Schools Branch Families of Schools

10.3 Appendix C: Provincial Government Regions for PSB Schools, Offices and Worksites

11.0 CROSS REFERENCE

11.1 *Education Act*, School Calendar Regulations

11.2 Memorandum of Agreement between the Education Negotiation Agency and the Prince Edward Island Teachers Federation

11.3 Collective Agreement between the Education Negotiation Agency and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3260

11.4 Collective Agreement between the Education Negotiation Agency and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1770, 1775, 1145.

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