



EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN SCHOOLS

APPROVED: 1978.06.20

REVISED: 2001.05.29
2008.06.24

POLICY

The district shall have a well-defined set of guidelines for responding to emergency situations in schools and for determining procedures should an emergency necessitate the closure of a school.

The primary consideration in all decisions related to school emergencies shall be the safety of students and staff.

Responsibility Centre: Assistant Superintendents
References: *School Act*, Section 85



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PREAMBLE

The district has a responsibility to ensure the safety of students and staff in emergency situations.

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REGULATIONS:

1. The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for all decisions relating to temporary school closures. Such decisions will be made in consultation with the school principal and other staff as appropriate.
2. The school principal is responsible for ensuring that appropriate procedures, as outlined in this policy and in the district's *Critical Incident Quick Reference Guide*, are implemented in the event of an emergency.
3. Administrative procedures of a preventative nature shall be listed in the staff handbook. Such procedures include, but are not limited to, fire, evacuation and lockdown drills, building security, workplace safety, prevention of violence, reporting of suspected child abuse, threat incident reporting, personal safety to and from school, medical alert procedures and the supervision of students.
4. The school principal will review safety procedures and update staff with respect to such procedures annually.

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ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:1. Temporary Closure of Schools

1.1. Decision made prior to school opening:

- 1.1.1. The Superintendent will contact local media in order to inform parents as soon as possible. Contact will also be made with the school principal and the district transportation coordinator.
- 1.1.2. The school principal will ensure that staff are informed of the closure as early as possible. Staff will also be notified of whether they should report to work at an alternate location.
- 1.1.3. The Superintendent will notify the switchboard operator at the central administration office so that parent inquiries can be answered appropriately.
- 1.1.4. The transportation coordinator will contact the district's bussing contractor to inform them of the closure. Busses will, however, continue to run in order to pick up students who may not be able to return home safely.
- 1.1.5. The principal will ensure the safety of students who do arrive at school and will attempt to have them return home. For elementary students and for students with special needs, parents must be contacted and arrangements made before they are released.

1.2. Decision made after school opening:

- 1.2.1. The principal will ensure the safety of students and will evacuate the school building as necessary. In the event of an evacuation, school staff will not leave the building until all students have safely left or until authorized to do so by the principal.
- 1.2.2. Arrangements will be made to have students return home wherever possible. For elementary students and for students with special needs, parents must be contacted and arrangements made before they are released.
- 1.2.3. The transportation coordinator will contact the district's bussing contractor to inform them of the closure. A decision will be made in consultation with the principal with respect to whether busses will run at the end of that day.



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- 1.3. Arrangements for staff:
 - 1.3.1. In the event of a school closure staff will work in the school building if conditions permit.
 - 1.3.2. If conditions are such that staff can not be in the school building, the school principal will assign teachers and other staff to a work location in another school district building for the duration of the school closure.
 - 1.3.3. For any full day that the school is closed, the principal may cancel CUPE employees' shifts (article 11.08) should their services not be required. Alternatively, CUPE workers may elect to take vacation for that period of time.

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