

Policy Manual – Administration

A.03 Inclement Weather and Emergency School Closings

The mission of Catholic Education in Hamilton-Wentworth, in union with our Bishop, is to enable all learners to realize the fullness of humanity of which Our Lord Jesus Christ is the model.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board:

1. to expect that each school be in session and that all employees attend his/her duties each school day;
2. to close schools when it is apparent that inclement weather conditions, or other emergency conditions might affect the safety of pupils and staff;
3. coordinate with the HWSTS to cancel the transportation of students when it is considered to be unsafe;
4. to establish procedures to be followed should it become necessary to close schools/Board buildings;
5. that this policy shall apply to all schools including elementary, secondary, Continuing Education, ancillary educational locations and other Board buildings including the Father Kryan Kennedy Catholic Education Centre, Nicholas Mancini Centre, Thomas Mahony Building, St. Mary Catholic Education Resource Centre and child care centres;
6. that this policy shall apply when the Regional Weather Office predicts potential weather-related unsafe conditions. It also applies in unique emergency situations such as extended utility outages;
7. that this policy shall apply to either the entire City of Hamilton or when inclement weather may affect only one or more parts of the city.

Purpose

The inclement weather policy supports:

1. The decision to close schools at the discretion of the Director of Education or designate.
2. The decision to close the Board office and other administrative buildings at the discretion of the Director of Education or designate.
3. The principal, in consultation with the appropriate Superintendent of Education, to have discretion to close the school and communicate the reason in a timely manner to: a) the Media & Communications Manager, or designate;
b) the Superintendent of Education;
c) the Associate Director of Corporate Services, and
d) the Director of Education.
4. The principal to redirect staff, once all students are safely dismissed, to an alternative work location or authorize them to work from home in the event that the closure is limited to a specific school(s)/site(s).

5. The Fr. Kyran Kennedy Catholic Education Centre to remain open at least until all schools are closed.
6. All contact with the news media relating to school closures or early dismissal due to inclement weather or other conditions, shall be made through the Media & Communications Manager or designate.
7. The Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services meeting with the Bus Company(ies) serving the Board before the end of September of each year to review the Board's policies and procedures pertaining to inclement weather closures.
8. The Board's Plant Operations Department meeting with snow removal companies and arrange for these companies to consult with principals to clarify the Board's/school snow clearing requirements before the first snow fall.
9. A letter to be prepared each year outlining parent responsibility and procedures pertaining to inclement weather closures. This letter is to be available in languages other than English and French in order to accommodate the variety of nationalities within the school system.
10. A memorandum to be prepared each year to provide all staff with direction regarding expectations on inclement weather days.

Responsibility

Director of Education

Regulations**Related Policies**

Related Board Committee Committee
of the Whole

Policy Review Date

BM Original Policy Approved 21 June 1977

Revisions: 2 May 1995, 1 October 2002, 6 June 2006, 29 June 2010, 07 April 2015, 06
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To be reviewed every five years