



#### Rationale

Situations arise where it is necessary to close the school(s):

- To preserve the safety and well-being of the students and employees in adverse conditions of an extreme nature (e.g., severe weather conditions).
- To release the students and employees from school where the circumstances are such that instruction cannot be carried out in the immediate future (e.g., power outage).

While all situations cannot be fully covered, schools should have a plan in place which takes into account the various home situations (e.g., both parents working, the age of the students, availability of transportation, etc.).

School will be closed for students and staff if conditions are such that students and staff are at a safety or health risk. Any of the following factors, or combinations of them, shall serve as guides for considering school closure or early dismissal of students:

- Inclement weather – extreme cold, excessive snow or ice or any condition where it is not safe to travel.
- Loss of power and heat
- Inadequate water supply
- Sewer back-up
- Structural damage to the school building

Many of our parents drive their children to school. If parents believe the local conditions are unsafe, they may keep their child at home or arrange for their early dismissal.

#### Policy

Each school will develop and maintain clear and detailed school closure procedures for both anticipated and unanticipated closures.

In emergencies school(s) may be closed by the Principal and/or Superintendent of Schools where, in their judgment, the circumstances warrant the closure.

#### Procedure

##### **Anticipated Closures (Inclement Weather).**

1. Each school will develop and communicate school procedures to parents for **Anticipated Closures (Inclement Weather)**.
2. Should there be need for the school to be closed for consecutive days, such decisions will be made each individual day, following the same procedure as the first day.

If the school closes after the students arrive at school, parents will be contacted by phone to come and pick up their child. Students will be supervised and remain at school until such time that they can be picked up.

##### **Unanticipated Closures (Water Issues/Power Outage/Inclement Weather)**

1. In the event of an unanticipated closure during school hours, the following will apply:



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- a. In the event of a power outage or water issue, students may be kept for as long as it safe to do so, and then dismissed if the situation has not been satisfactorily resolved.
- b. In the event of the onset of severe weather, the Principal and/or Superintendent will determine the point at which the school will be closed, and the students dismissed.
- c. As soon as possible after the decision has been made:
  - Parents will be contacted via Social Media, or other direct form of communication the school uses and asked to pick up, or have an authorized person, pick up their child(ren). The Principal or Designate will send an automated message to parents/guardians using the school's communication methods.
2. In the event of an early dismissal as noted in #3, the Principal and/or staff on site shall ensure that all children are picked up by people authorized to do so.
3. Decisions and announcement regarding the continued closure of the school will be made by 6:30 am each morning following the same procedures established noted in #1.

#### REFERENCE

*Policy 301 - Role of the Superintendent*

*Policy 303 - Role of the Principal*

*BC Emergency Management Planning Guide for Schools, Districts and Authorities*

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