Administration 13 – Inclement Weather

Original Date: Oct. 9, 2007 Revised: September 15, 2014 Responsible Administrator: Secretary-Treasurer

1.0 RATIONALE

Prudent planning is necessary to ensure the safety and well being of the students during inclement weather. The Superintendent or designate shall direct a system-wide or school-based suspension of school bus service in every instance where climate and/or road conditions constitute a significant hazard to the safety and well being of school bus passengers. Attempts should be made to contact neighbouring school jurisdictions regarding their plans.

2.0 PROCESS

2.1 The Secretary Treasurer will be responsible for ensuring this practice is maintained and updated.

2.2 The Superintendent shall consult with the Manager, Transportation, before directing a suspension of school bus services.

3.0 TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

3.1 School bus service shall be suspended at a temperature of minus forty (40) degrees Celsius at the Sturgeon School Division Weather Station, Morinville, AB.

3.2 The Superintendent or designate shall direct a system wide suspension of school bus service in every instance where in his/her opinion, climatic and/or road conditions constitute a significant hazard to the safety and well-being of school bus passengers. Attempts should be made to contact neighboring school jurisdictions regarding their plans

3.3 Suspension of school bus services may be limited to a specific region of Sturgeon School Division No. 24. When this occurs, only buses that serve those schools will be affected.

3.4 The Superintendent or designate may suspend bus services on a route-by-route basis. When this occurs, all schools will remain open. Should weather conditions be extreme or deteriorate during the day in a particular region/area, the Manager, in consultation with the Superintendent or designate, may suspend bus services in that specific area only.

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3.5 When weather or road conditions deteriorate during the day, the Superintendent or designate may authorize individual or all buses to leave school prior to regular dismissal time.

3.6 A school bus operator, in consultation with the Manager, Transportation, may decide not to operate his/her school bus at the start of a school day if road or climatic conditions in his/her area of service are of a nature that would make the operation of his/her school bus unsafe.

3.6.1 The Manager, Transportation, or designate shall advise the principal of each affected school. The school bus operator shall advise the parent of each child on his/her route of the decision.

3.6.2 Whenever a school bus operator, in consultation with the Manager, Transportation, determines that hazardous road or climatic conditions may arise during the course of a school day, he/she shall proceed to the school and request the release of students who ride on his/her bus. The principal shall release such students when requested by the school bus operator and shall notify the parents.

3.6.3 A school bus operator, in consultation with the Manager, Transportation, may determine during the course of his/her route that road or climatic conditions make it unsafe to continue on the route. In this circumstance, the school bus operator shall attempt to park the bus in a safe location off the traveled road allowance. The driver shall immediately attempt to establish radio contact with school authorities, in consultation with the Manager, Transportation, or designate, so that parents can be informed of the circumstances and location of their children.

3.6.4 A bus driver who cannot complete the morning route shall inform the bus monitor, all parents on the route, and the Manager, Transportation, or designate of the decision. The Manager, Transportation, or designate will inform the principal of the school and the Superintendent or designate.

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3.7 Upon suspension of school bus service as confirmed by the Manager, Transportation, or designate, the bus operator shall implement telephone fan-out notification of other school bus operators.

3.8 Principals shall include a copy of these regulations in their school newsletters no later than November first of each school year.

3.9 During the period November 15th to March 30th of each school year, parents shall ensure that their children who are school bus passengers, have, on their person, proper outerwear, headgear, mitts and footwear. The Principal of each school shall ensure that all parents are made aware of the requirement. The Manager, Transportation, will ensure that all school bus operators are familiar with this requirement.

3.9.1 A school bus driver who has concerns about proper outerwear shall first address this to the student. If the situation is not resolved the driver shall contact the parent(s). If this process is not successful, the driver is to refer the matter to the school principal or designate for further action.

3.10 A decision by the Superintendent or designate to suspend school bus service shall be communicated to Radio Stations CFCW, CHED, CBC and CISN and Television Stations Global, City TV. These stations shall be notified of the suspension of school bus service immediately after the decision to suspend has been made. Only announcements carried on these stations shall be considered to be official. No other employee, contractor, or employee of a contractor is authorized to announce through the media a suspension of school bus service or the closure of a school. The Manager, Transportation, shall advise all stations of the decision so that it may be broadcast commencing at 6:00 a.m. or in special circumstances the evening before.

3.10.1 The Manager, Transportation, will arrange notification of all school bus operators whenever a suspension of school bus service occurs. School bus operators will attempt to notify all families on their routes of the suspension of service.

3.10.2 The Manager, Transportation, will arrange to have the notice of suspension of schools placed on the Sturgeon School Division webpage.

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3.11 Schools shall remain open when school bus services are suspended by the Superintendent or designate, and will receive students who are conveyed to school by their parents. Parents, who have brought their children to school on days when school bus services are suspended because of inclement weather or hazardous road conditions, will be responsible for picking up their children at the end of the school day.

3.12 The school shall advise parents to make alternate arrangements for accommodating their children in the event school is dismissed early.

3.12.1 If the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the students remain at school under adult supervision, as arranged by the principal, until accommodations can be found.

4.0 ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

4.1 The lowest temperature at which students will be required to go out of doors shall be –20 Celsius, including the wind-chill factor.

4.2 The principal of each school shall establish rules which reasonably provide- for students to remain indoors during inclement weather. The rules shall include:

4.2.1 The designation of an area for students who are outdoors to use for periodic shelter when needed.

4.2.2 That students will at all times be permitted access to washroom facilities.

4.3 The principal of each school shall ensure that staff, students and parents are familiar with the rules.

4.4 Article 15.1.1 of the ATA collective agreement requires direct communication between the teacher and the principal in cases where the teacher believes he/she is unable to attend school because of impassable roads. While the expectation is that all staff will be at school, the principal will make the decision regarding the level of staffing required for the operation of the school.

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