

Administrative Procedures Manual	Administrative Procedure 133
	Severe Weather
	APPROVED: September 2025
Page 1 of 6	AMENDED/REVIEWED:
LEGAL REFERENCE:	Education Act: 33, 196 Employment Standards Act Government of Canada – Air Quality Health Index

Background

Alberta experiences significant weather changes. Extreme heat or cold temperatures, wind chill, smoke, snow and ice, or severe storms can potentially be detrimental to an individual's safety and/or impact road safety.

An Administrative Procedure for Severe Weather exists to enable the Superintendent, or the school Principal, to modify certain elements of the school day, in alignment with foreseeable safety concerns

Procedures

1. Parents hold the ultimate responsibility for deciding when to send a child to school and/or whether to travel by school bus. Parents are not required to send their children to school if, in their judgment, weather conditions are detrimental to the safety or well-being of their children.
2. The Superintendent reserves the right to modify or cancel any aspect of the school day, school transportation and/or school events.
3. Any decision made to modify educational opportunities and/or transportation shall always occur in full consideration of student and staff safety.
4. **Modification to the School Day or School Activities**
 - 4.1. Weather indicators, included in this Administrative Procedure, shall guide the determination of response required for modification of activities; however
 - 4.1.1. The principal reserves the right to amend or cancel any activity, in the interest of student safety, regardless of the degree of severity of the weather indicator.
 - 4.2. Modification of the school day and/or school activities shall proceed based on the following measure:
 - 4.2.1. The Superintendent or designate may modify or cancel transportation, and/or modify or cancel events or activities, in consideration of any weather indicators (listed below) that may negatively impact health or safety;
 - 4.2.2. The Principal or designate may cancel or modify any school activity in consideration of any indicators (listed below) that may negatively impact health or safety; notably:
 - 4.2.2.1. The degree of concern for modifying or cancelling curricular (mandated) activities may be greater than the degree of concern for extra-curricular activities in which the parent holds the ultimate responsibility for approval.

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5. Weather Indicators for Amending and or Cancelling Activities

- 5.1. The Principal shall consider specific indicators in amending or cancelling school activities.
- 5.1.1. For clarity, the indicators are used in the consideration of determining how a specific activity may be impacted by a specific type of weather.
- 5.1.2. With respect to the indicators listed below, the Principal may modify or cancel outdoor or off-site activities when considered necessary to do so. Alternate plans or cancellation may need to be made, at any point during the day, if conditions change;
- 5.1.3. Students may be directed to remain inside, due to the cancellation of outdoor activities and/or recess activities

5.2. Weather Indicators:

Indicator	Considerations / Restrictions
Alberta Emergency Alert notifications	Any notification of severe weather, for any type of weather, received through Alberta Emergency Alert.
Hot Weather Indicators	Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperatures or humidex value that exceed 32°C. • Daily UV index exceeding 5. Outdoor activities, greater than 10 minutes
Wind Speed Indicators	Considerations: Sustained wind-speed at or greater than 70 km/h or gusts to 90 km/h or more.
Rainfall and or Hail Indicators	Considerations: Rainfall and/or hail deemed to be excessively uncomfortable for students in outdoor activities
Unexpected Weather Indicators	Considerations: Weather may change quickly in Alberta, and any significant change in weather conditions, for which students and staff are not prepared, may necessitate an altered plan for transportation and/or school events or activities.

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5.3. **Air Quality Health Index Indicators** High Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) indicators that are locally determined; respectively:

- 5.3.1 The online Government of Canada Air Quality Health Index shall be used to determine air quality ([Grande Prairie, Alberta - Air Quality Health Index \(AQHI\) - Environment Canada](#)) this website publishes the current AQHI readings in real time;
- 5.3.2 For poor conditions, the Air Quality Health Index **shall** be monitored closely and continuously as the quality can change rapidly and is dependent on local conditions.

Air Quality Level	Considerations / Restrictions
1-3	Considerations: The health risk is low, and activities can be maintained as planned.
4-6	Considerations: The health risk is moderate and the Principal may consider reducing the intensity level and/or duration of activities; indoor recess may be considered depending on local conditions; monitor students with specific health concerns.
7-10	Considerations: The health risk is high and the Principal may consider reducing or rescheduling outdoor activities; strenuous outdoor activities should be modified or rescheduled if concerns cannot be mitigated; indoor recess may be considered depending on local conditions; monitor students with specific health concerns. Restrictions: For 'At Risk' individuals (those with heart or breathing problems), reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Children should also take it easy when outside.
10+	Restrictions: The health risk is extreme. Outdoor activities shall be cancelled ; recess shall proceed indoors only.

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5.4. **Transportation Risk Indicators:**

- 5.4.1. Temperature extremes.
- 5.4.2. Current and/or forecasted freezing rain prior to, and during, transportation service times.
- 5.4.3. Reports from similarly affected neighboring school jurisdictions regarding their plans; and
- 5.4.4. Cautionary reports from Alberta Transportation when available.

6. **Severe weather impact on school transportation:**

- 6.1. Buses will not operate if the temperature in Grande Prairie at 6 a.m. is -40 Celsius or colder; -45 Celsius with windchill. The temperature and windchill measure will be obtained from the Environment Canada website.
- 6.2. If inclement weather is present at 6 a.m. and the criteria in 6.1 has not been met, the Superintendent may cancel student bus transportation if the Superintendent determines that providing student transportation would not be in the best interest of the students' safety.
- 6.3. The criteria in 6.1 also applies to scheduled bus transportation for sports events and field trips for the day in question.
- 6.4. If a cancellation has occurred as a result of 6.1, the Director of Operations and Maintenance or designate will communicate via an email no later than 6:30 a.m. to all Principals informing them of the cancellation.
- 6.5. If weather conditions deteriorate during the day, the Superintendent may decide to direct the Director of Operations to have the Transportation Contractor provide student transportation home earlier than the end of the normal school day. In this event, the Principals will send notification to all school families.

7. **Notification regarding student transportation alteration or cancellation**

- 7.1. Should the Superintendent or designate determine that it is necessary to cancel or amend student transportation:
 - 7.1.1. The Director of Operations shall arrange for the transportation service provider to be notified immediately.
- 7.2. In the event of the cancellation of student bus transportation as per 7.1, announcements of the cancellation will be posted on the following communication channels.
 - 7.2.1. The Division Transportation Alerts Web Page
 - 7.2.2. Email notification to subscribed users of the Division Transportation Alerts

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Web Page

- 7.2.3. Alerts sent via FirstView App for affected schools and routes
- 7.2.4. Notification via local radio stations
- 7.3. Schools shall communicate any changes or alterations to the day, due to weather, as prudent to do so; and
- 7.4. Schools shall remain open.

8. Severe weather impact on the school day:

- 8.1. Whereas severe weather may cause the cancellation of transportation, with schools remaining open for learning, the weather may become severe enough to require an early dismissal or modification to the location for learning.
- 8.2. In the event of emergent severe weather, an early dismissal may be deemed to be necessary in extreme circumstances and approved by the Superintendent or designate:
 - 8.2.1. The Principal shall consult with the Superintendent or designate to determine the potential utilization of the school's alternate emergency site; and
 - 8.2.2. The Principal shall ensure that effective planning and appropriate parent contact occurs in the event of early dismissal due to severe weather situations.

9. Severe weather impact on learning:

When transportation is cancelled, all Division schools shall remain open for learning as deemed possible to do so. Teachers shall endeavour to balance the learning-outcome requirements of students who have arrived at school with the learning-outcome requirements of students who are remaining at home. Notably:

- 9.1. If new material is presented to students that are able to attend, teachers shall make provision for other students to attain the objectives of the material missed during their absence.
- 9.2. The Grande Prairie Public School Division shall adhere to Alberta Education's guidelines regarding missed Diploma Examinations or Provincial Achievement Tests.