2019-2020 Winter Edition

On the Bus

Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay

WINTER CANCELLATIONS

As winter approaches, we remind all students and parents to be prepared to adjust to school bus delays and cancellations due to poor weather and/or road conditions. Not only is it important to dress warmly while waiting for the bus, parents and their children must have a plan in place for what to do if the bus doesn't arrive or what will happen if busing is cancelled.

One of the most challenging decisions for Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay (STSTB) is whether to cancel busing during inclement weather. The process starts at 5:00 a.m. with the STSTB Consortium Manager receiving reports on weather and road conditions from our contracted bus companies who compile information from experienced, professional school bus drivers living throughout the district. Additional information is obtained from Environment Canada, the Ministry of Transportation and municipal road crews. After reviewing all the data and further consulting our school bus contractors and area roads

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BE PREPARED

Bus students and their parents or guardians are reminded that extra caution should be taken during the winter months. Please take a moment and review this important information with your children:

- Children should be dressed appropriately for the colder weather. Unexpected mechanical problems with the bus may occur more frequently at this time of year. Children must be prepared for this as buses cool off very quickly.
- Usually cold or stormy weather can result in bus schedules being unavoidably delayed. We encourage parents to use extra caution with children on those days. Children should be accompanied to the bus stop or have very clear instructions on what to do if the bus does not arrive. Never leave children at the stop with no backup arrangements for an emergency.
- Monitor Reported Delays on our website and know your bus route number, name and telephone number of the school bus company to call for updates should the bus be significantly delayed
- A build-up of ice and snow can create a safety hazard for children waiting at the bus stop. Ensure that your child understands the importance of standing back from the curb as the bus approaches the bus stop.
- Children will find it easier to walk through the ice and snow when their school books and lunches are carried in a back pack. It is also much safer for them to board the bus with their hands free to use the bus handrail.

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maintenance supervisors, the Consortium Manager then decides whether to recommend cancelling student transportation for the day. The decision to cancel is then confirmed with the Directors of Education, or their designates, of each school board via conference call by 6:25 a.m. Any decision to close schools remains solely with each school board's Director or designate.

With such a large geographic area, it is not unusual for weather to be worse in some parts of our service area than in others. However, to limit confusion, bus cancellations will only fall under one of two scenarios, either Rural-Only or System-Wide (rural and city).

As many rural high school routes cross multiple elementary school catchment zones and transfers occur at rural elementary schools it would be confusing to narrow Rural-Only cancellations down to only specific areas. Therefore, a rural closure affects all rural areas. STSTB understands that parents may get frustrated if roads in their immediate area look fine, however, travel elsewhere in the district that the bus their child rides on may be unsafe.

Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay appreciates that cancelling buses in inclement weather can have a significant effect on family routines; however, student safety is our number one priority, so there are times we simply must cancel busing in the interest of keeping everyone safe. Once again, we remind all families to have an alternate plan in place should school transportation and/or schools be closed.

Ultimately, it is the parents / guardians decision to have their child(ren) take the bus if transportation is running.

Also keep in mind that buses may not be able to service all areas during adverse conditions and to always have a backup plan.

Transportation in Extreme Cold Temperatures

Transportation may be cancelled if the ambient temperature reaches -34°C or colder as reported at 6:00 a.m. at the Thunder Bay Airport on the Environment Canada website.

Student Transportation Information, Transportation Status and Reported Delays can be found at

www.ststb.ca

Transportation Cancellation Notices:

www.ststb.ca.

/ststhunderbay

/tbaybus

/ststhunderbay

STSTB Emergency Weather Closure Line: (807)625-1661

Local radio station broadcasts