

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

General Administration

**Inclement Weather: Transportation
Shutdowns, School Operations, and
Student Supervision**

GEN #01

Revised: September 2026

Background

Christ The Redeemer Catholic School's (CTR) Board of Trustees' (Board) [Workplace Health and Safety Policy](#) states that the Board delegates to the Superintendent the responsibility for implementing and maintaining a health and safety program consistent with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Regulations and Code, and other relevant legislation. Our Faith compels us to create a safe environment, and safe procedures. As a means to promote safety and create a sense of order, this administrative procedure will address the procedures that will be adhered to when there is inclement weather, or some other circumstance that impacts the transportation system, school operations, or student supervision. Information from bus drivers, surrounding school jurisdictions, Environment Canada, the Alberta Motor Association, and local law enforcement shall be reviewed.

Transportation Shutdown, School Operation, and School Closure Procedures

1. Transportation providers and CTR transportation staff review information from weather media and other resources, as well as information provided by area drivers to transportation providers.
 - 1.1. When possible, the Superintendent, or designate, shall make the decision to shut down some or all of the transportation system and/or the schools by 6:30 a.m. Considerations include weather forecast and road conditions, visibility, ambient temperature, and wind chill.
2. CTR contracted bus services, and the contractor may make a determination not to run buses.
3. The Superintendent, or designate, shall compose a message for CTR's website. The message will be shared on the applicable school websites. The following scripts are to be used or modified at the discretion of the Associate Superintendent of Corporate Services and the Director of Communications. Site-based administrators are also instructed to have their receptionists use the following when responding to calls about the status of the school day:
 - 3.1. Schools are open. Most buses are expected to run as usual. Due to winter weather and road conditions, expect delays. Students and staff driving to school should exercise caution giving them extra time. Bus drivers have the ability to cancel individual routes. For up-to-date transportation information, please access the click on the bus icon on the divisional website at www.redeemer.ab.ca.
 - 3.2. Schools are open. However, buses in rural areas are not running. In-town buses are (or are not) running. In addition, some students and teachers may be delayed or unable to attend. As a result, teachers will use their professional judgement in making the decision to present new material or to undertake supplementary activities, using face-to-face instruction, remote learning, or a hybrid model. Students who plan to do their schoolwork from home should monitor their school email and google classroom. Parents, if you decide your children will not attend, please call or email to inform the school.
 - 3.3. Due to winter weather and road conditions, schools are closed. For up-to-date transportation information, please click on the bus icon on the divisional website at www.redeemer.ab.ca.

4. Once the message is composed, the Associate Superintendent of Corporate Services will inform site-based administrators. The Director of Communications shall post the message to the CTR website and social media. Site-based administrators shall then email their parents and share the link to the website message. If email fails, the Associate Superintendent, or designate, shall phone or text message superintendents and site-based administrators directing them to the CTR website for the full transportation announcement, and asking the site-based administrators to email it out to parents as soon as they are able.
5. Principals shall share these communication protocols via website, newsletter, or social media, as appropriate. Principals should consider reminding parents and staff of these communication protocols via a mass email on any evening when the weather is threatening to be disruptive the next day.
6. Area-wide cancellation of PM (only) bus service:
 - 6.1. If buses run in the morning, but conditions deteriorate CTR transportation will communicate with the transportation providers and aim to decide by 1:00 PM of any necessary cancellation to bus service.
 - 6.2. CTR transportation may decide to proactively notify parents to encourage parental pick-up or share for the potential of cancellations instead of deciding upon cancellations, in cases where this is more helpful for families and schools.
7. Information for staff members related to inclement weather:
 - 7.1. Staff who commute from out of town are expected to make independent decisions about whether they feel safe to drive to work. When schools have been closed to students or when busses are unable to run, staff may also have difficulty safely getting to their workplaces. If conditions improve, staff have the ability to report to their school late. Staff may also refer to winter driving information from the [Alberta Motor Association](#) which includes advice on winter tires, emergency preparation and winter driving information.
 - 7.1.1. In the event staff do not feel safe to drive, in the Leave Management System, staff will record their absence with OTHER and record "Inclement Weather – Working from Home with Full Pay" in the notes. By default, a teacher should book a substitute teacher as schools will remain open, but this may be dependent upon the community, which routes are cancelled, how many students are anticipated to be absent or how many students will be learning from home. Staff working from home shall use their professional judgement to make decisions on how to present new material or to undertake supplementary activities.
 - 7.1.2. If weather or road conditions deteriorate during the school day, staff who believe they may need to leave the school early shall consult with their principal before doing so. In considering the request, the principal shall balance the safety of the staff member with the need to maintain appropriate supervision and safe school operations. The principal shall consult with the Superintendent or designate when circumstances may affect the school's ability to maintain normal operations.
 - 7.2. When making decisions regarding the introduction of new material or supplementary learning activities during periods of inclement weather, staff shall use their professional judgment to determine how best to meet the needs of students. Consideration shall be given to the grade and subject area, the number of students in attendance or absent, the duration and nature of the inclement weather, and the ability to adapt planned instruction.
 - 7.3. Students who are unable to attend school due to inclement weather shall not be disadvantaged as a result of their absence. Teachers shall make reasonable, non-punitive provisions to support students in achieving learning outcomes addressed during their absence.

8. In most cases, CTR will only completely close a school down when there is a catastrophic weather event and/or up to 12 hours' notice can be given parents. This is because CTR serves early morning commuters in most communities and last-minute plans could cause children to be left alone at home, bus stops, or schools. Emergency closure may be required under the following circumstances: extreme weather conditions, power failure, water and sewer problems, fire or any other situations that may endanger the health and safety of students and staff. When a decision is made by the Superintendent, or designate, to close one or more schools in the division, the communication protocols in sections 2 to 3 of this Administrative Procedure shall be used. In all circumstances where there is a school closure, the principal must ensure that there is a responsible staff member at the school to look after the needs of any students who may not have been aware of the school closure and who arrive at the school. When schools are closed, teachers and support staff will not be required to attend school. Should circumstances require the early dismissal of students and early closure of one or more schools in the division, the decision to close shall be made in consultation with the Superintendent or designate. The decision to authorize an early dismissal will almost never be made since the jurisdiction cannot send students home without knowing if supervision is in place.
9. Principals shall ensure there is someone at the school after hours on days with inclement weather in the event a bus has to turn back to the school.
10. If it is not possible to dismiss students at the end of the day due to inclement weather, principals shall develop a plan to congregate, safely supervise, and feed them. Principals should use emergency contact information and direct communication with parents or guardians to problem solve about each child's plans for the evening (i.e., stay with a friend). Secondary students who are driving should be encouraged to consult with their parents about the safest after school plan.

Student Supervision in Inclement Weather

Cold and Wind Chill

During the winter months, wind chill may affect the decision to allow students outdoors for recess or other activities. School administrators shall consider the following guidelines when making decisions about outdoor activities during cold weather periods:

- 0C to -20C Wind Chill: Care should be taken in assessing the appropriateness of sending students outside.
- -21C to -27C Wind Chill: Serious consideration should be given to whether it is appropriate for students to be outside.
- Below -27C Wind Chill: Students shall not go outside during the school day.

In addition to the wind chill itself, other important factors to consider are:

- Whether students are appropriately dressed (hat, mittens/gloves, scarf, warm clothing, etc.).
- How long the students will be outside.
- Activity level (heat generation).
- Exposure to the wind (also, the sun has a small warming effect this time of year so may affect the perception of cold).
- Local conditions, the age of students, and other contexts that may justify exceptions to the guidelines above.

Air Quality (Smoke)

The wildfire season often impacts air quality. School administrators should monitor air quality using [Alberta's Air Quality Health Index Map](#).

The following chart is Alberta's Air Quality Health Index:

Health Risk	Air Quality Health Index	Health Messages	
		At Risk Population	General Population
Low Risk	1 – 3	Enjoy your usual outdoor activities.	Ideal air quality for outdoor activities.
Moderate Risk	4 – 6	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you are experiencing symptoms.	No need to modify your usual outdoor activities unless you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
High Risk	7 – 10	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also take it easy.	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
Very High Risk	Above 10	Avoid strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also avoid outdoor physical exertion.	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors, especially if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.

Source: <https://www.alberta.ca/about-the-air-quality-health-index.aspx>

School administrators should adhere to the following recommendations:

- Low Risk (1-3): Outdoor activities are permitted without restriction.
- Moderate Risk (4-6): Outdoor activities are permitted and there is no need to modify usual activity unless an individual has known respiratory conditions or is showing symptoms such as coughing or throat irritation.
- High Risk (7-10): Students can go outside but must reduce or reschedule strenuous activities. School administrators should consider shortening or reducing the number of outdoor activities. Staff and students should watch for symptoms such as coughing and shortness of breath. Any individuals with known respiratory issues should remain inside.
- Extreme Risk (>10): Avoid all outdoor activities, including outdoor recess and outdoor physical education and co-curricular sports. All students should remain inside.