



Severe Weather

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Regarding Severe Weather Procedures

The Red Deer Public Schools Transportation desk receives numerous telephone calls throughout the winter months about whether or not schools are open or if buses are running on any given day. Here is a list of FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (in no particular order) to assist you with answers to the most commonly asked weather related questions. If your question is not answered here, please call the School Board office at the number above.

- [Under what conditions will schools be closed?](#)
- [Do parents have the right to keep their children at home if they feel weather conditions make it unsuitable for them to attend school?](#)
- [Is it safe for students to walk to/from school during severe weather conditions?](#)
- [Is it safe for students to walk to/from the bus stop during severe weather conditions?](#)
- [Under what conditions will buses be canceled?](#)
- [Will the schools be open if the buses are not in operation?](#)
- [Under what conditions will students be kept inside the school during the school day?](#)

Under what conditions will schools be closed?

Answer. The practice of the Red Deer Public School District is to keep the schools open, if at all possible. In this way, we are able to meet our responsibility to provide access to education, to provide a safe haven for children during severe weather conditions, and to meet the needs of parents who wish/need to send their children to school. As a result, it is extremely rare for the schools to be closed. However, if extreme weather conditions cause power outages in schools, or roads and sidewalks become impassable due to snow or other conditions, the schools may be closed. If this occurs, announcements to that effect will be posted on our website and will be made on local media outlets.

Do parents/guardians have the right to keep their children at home if they feel that weather conditions make it unsuitable for them to attend school?

Answer. Yes, certainly. Parents/guardians always have the right to keep their children at home when severe weather conditions occur.

Is it safe for children to walk to and from school during severe weather conditions?

Answer. If the schools are open, we defer to the judgment of parents/guardians to determine whether or not it is safe for their children to walk to and from school. Nevertheless, when severe cold and/or strong winds occur, it is recommended that parents walk or drive their children to and from school. It is also recommended that children be well dressed against the elements, with appropriate coats, mitts, headwear, boots etc.

Is it safe for children to walk to and from the bus stop during severe weather conditions?

Answer. When severe weather conditions occur, parents/guardians of young children who ride the bus to school should walk with their children to the bus stop and wait with them until the bus arrives; then pick their children up from the bus stop at the end of the day. Again, children should be well dressed against the elements, with appropriate coats, mitts, headwear, boots etc.

Under what conditions will buses be cancelled?

Answer. In the Red Deer Public School District, buses will operate as long as the roads are passable and the bus contractor feels that the buses can be operated safely. The Red Deer Public School District works with three different busing contractors (City of Red Deer, Prairie Bus Lines, Red Deer Society for Christian Education Busing), so when severe weather occurs, representatives of these contractors contact the Transportation Manager when they feel they cannot operate their buses safely. If they feel that buses cannot be operated, the buses will not run. If buses will not be operating on a particular day, announcements will be made on local media outlets and will be posted on the District website. If buses are operating, they will run as close to schedule as possible, but delays may occur and should be expected.

Will the schools be open if the buses are not running?

Answer. In most cases, yes. Keeping the schools open and operating the buses are two separate decisions.

Under what conditions will children be kept inside during the school day?

Answer. In consultation with parents, each school has established its own procedures with respect to “in days” and “out days.” As a general rule, students are kept inside when temperatures reach –20 Celsius or colder, inclusive of wind chill.