



Policy Code – Version: T5 – V3

Policy Name: Cancellation of Transportation Services

Approved by motion of Board on 18/10/2010

Amended by motion of the Board on 04/11/2019

Cross Reference

Related Forms

Inclement Weather/Emergency Closure Transportation Cancellation Procedure

Policy Statement

1. The General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer shall be given delegated authority by OSTA's Board of Directors to make the decision to cancel transportation due to inclement weather and/or road safety concerns.
2. The General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer shall be given delegated authority by OSTA's Board of Directors, to make the decision to cancel transportation due to emergency circumstances not related to inclement weather or road safety, upon consultation with the affected Member School Board's Director of Education, or their delegate.
3. For non-emergency situations, the authority to cancel transportation rests with the OSTA Board of Directors.
4. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority shall make reasonable efforts to inform parents of the cancellation of regular home to school transportation services when such services are cancelled due to weather, adverse road conditions, or any other reason.
5. In cases of morning service cancellation(s), parents, who transport pupils to school, shall be responsible for transporting them home at the end of the school day.
6. The General Manager shall be authorized to establish procedures as may be necessary to support this policy.

Procedure

Cancellations due to Inclement Weather or Road Safety Concerns

1. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority will make decisions regarding the system-wide cancellation of transportation services no later than 0600 hours, in accordance with the "*Inclement Weather/Emergency Closure Transportation Cancellation Procedures*" document and make appropriate arrangements for the cancellation of transportation service.
2. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority will announce the system-wide cancellation of transportation before 0600 hours, or as soon as possible thereafter, by:
 - a) Posting notice of such cancellations on the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority's website;
 - b) Notifying contracted transportation providers;
 - c) Send email notification to subscribers
 - d) Notifying designated media/social media outlets; and
 - e) Notifying designated staff of member Boards.
3. If transportation is cancelled in the morning, midday and afternoon transportation will not operate.
4. Due to the geographical size and diversity of the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority's jurisdiction, it is recognized there may be varying weather patterns in the region. However, in order to avoid confusion, OSTA will cancel vehicle transportation in the entire region.
5. Cancellation of the Walking School Bus will be determined by the Ottawa Safety Council and communicated to the Safety and Accessible Coordinator. Walking school bus routes may be cancelled by 6:30am. Cancellations are communicated to parents via email and social media. WSB may be cancelled if:
 - a) There has been freezing rain overnight and the sidewalks are not passable/have not been serviced adequately (i.e., salted).
 - b) There has been an accumulation of 10 centimetres or more of snow overnight and the sidewalks are not passable/have not been serviced adequately (i.e., plowed).

- c) There are conditions such as severe winds, severe storms or tornado warnings.
6. In cases where transportation cancellations due to inclement weather and/or the unscheduled closing of a school or schools is required after the regular school day begins, responsibilities are as follows:
- a) The General Manager, or designate, will arrange with the carrier or carriers for the early departure of the school buses, as appropriate;
 - b) The General Manager, or designate, will notify Communications Office staff of member school boards, who will be responsible for contacting local media outlets and providing the necessary details for a public announcement;
 - c) The General Manager, or designate, will post an announcement of the transportation cancellation or school closing, as appropriate, on the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority's website.
7. In cases of unscheduled transportation cancellations on one or more individual routes before the regular school day begins due to inclement weather, mechanical failure or adverse road conditions, responsibilities are as follows:
- a) The carrier will notify the General Manager, or designate, of the specific route services to be cancelled;
 - b) The General Manager, or designate, will notify the Principal of each school concerned by 7:00 a.m. of the specific route or routes that will not operate;
 - c) The General Manager, or designate, will post a notice on the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority website of individual route cancellations.
8. The General Manager is responsible for the development, maintenance, and annual review of the OSTA's "*Inclement Weather/Emergency Closure Transportation Cancellation Procedures*" document, which provides details as regards staff responsibilities and procedures with respect to transportation cancellations and emergency school closures.
9. The General Manager will ensure that a review of the "*Inclement Weather/Emergency Closure Transportation Cancellation Procedures*" document is completed by October 15 each school year and that information is updated to reflect changes as may be necessary. This annual review will include, but is not limited to:
- a) The review of any cooperative agreements that may be in effect with local transportation consortia, school boards, or contracted operators;
 - b) The review and update of parties designated as having responsibility under this policy, their contact information and responsibilities under these procedures;

- c) The review and update of media contacts for notice of transportation cancellations and their contact information;
- d) The review and update of designated member school board personnel to be notified of transportation cancellations and their contact information;
- e) The review and update of contracted vehicle operator designated personnel to be notified in the event of transportation cancellations, their contact information and responsibilities under these procedures.

10. The General Manager will annually provide the following:

- a) a copy of the updated "*Incident Weather/Emergency Closure Transportation Cancellation Procedures*" document to appropriate OSTA staff and the members of the Board of Directors;
- b) updated information to contracted school vehicle operators of procedures, contact information and their responsibilities with respect to the emergency cancellation of services;
- c) member school board Principals with information as to the means by which notification of service cancellations will be communicated, so that they can inform parents and the greater school community.

11. Prior to cancelling services in emergency circumstances, the GM/CAO, or their designate, will consult with the affected Member School Board to determine impacts on:

- a) school staff and student safety, and need for service of the affected school board
- b) school staff and student safety, and need for service of the other school board
- c) OSTA's ability to manage and monitor service and safety
- d) Operators' and Drivers' ability to manage and monitor service and safety

12. OSTA will communicate cancellation of services to the affected school community in a timely manner.