
TCSA Policies & Procedures

Section 4: Program & Services / Education

Reference: 4.301

Policy Title: School Year Calendar

Policy Statement:

The TCSA recognizes that a perpetual, common school year for all the schools in the region is a benefit to the planning and coordination of educational programs and services.

Purpose:

A perpetual, common school year is a benefit to the planning and coordination of programs and services by removing questions about when school will or will not be in session. Common school calendars benefit families with children in more than one school especially in Behchoko, and staff who plan travel around school sessional days. Common school calendars enable more effective collaboration between schools within the district, between school districts and assist with long term planning between the Agency and the Tlicho Government.

Procedures:

The CEO (superintendent) will annually submit a common school year for the Tlicho schools that adheres to the following criteria:

1. The school year will have no more than 570 hours instructional time in the kindergarten, no less than 997 instructional hours for grades 1-6, and no less than 1045 instructional hours for grades 7-12 with an additional 2.5 administration days and five (5) professional development days for instructional staff. The total number of days will not exceed 195 days;
 2. The school calendar will normally begin on the Thursday of the third week of August;
 3. The school calendar will end on a date in June that includes the writing of grade 12 Departmental examinations in the school with grade 12 students;
 4. Christmas holidays will begin no later than December 19th and will usually be no less than 15 calendar days;
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5. Winter break will be 10 school days and normally will be the 3rd & 4th week of March except in an Arctic Winter Games year when the break will be during those weeks;

6. All other holidays will be as per the statutory holidays including Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day and National Aboriginal Day;

7. The school calendar for the following school year will be reviewed by the Agency prior to the end of March in the preceding school year. On occasion, slight deviations from a strict interpretation of the policy may be required and this can be discussed and approved at this time.

Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act, 117.

Approval Dates: 1998; Revised May 20th, 2009.

TCSA Policies & Procedures

Section 4: Program & Services / Education

Reference: 4.302

Policy Title: Inclement Weather, Student Safety & School Closures

Policy Statement:

The TCSA recognizes both the Agency and parents share responsibility for the safety of children traveling to school from home, and home from school during periods of storms, poor visibility, extremely low temperatures, extremely high wind chill factors and other inclement weather conditions.

Ultimately the responsibility to decide whether conditions are safe to send a child to school or not rests with the parent. The responsibility to send children home safely rests with the school. However the Agency recognizes that some children will attend school irregardless of the weather conditions and for the safety of these children, schools should not be closed during inclement weather conditions.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines to managers to ensure the safety of school children during inclement weather conditions.

Procedures:

1. Schools should remain open on all sessional days irregardless of inclement weather conditions. All school staff are required to be on duty;
 2. In Behchokò, the principal and the bus manager may jointly determine that it is unsafe to operate school buses between Edzo and Rae when it is -45 C. or below. The school(s) will remain open if bus services are cancelled:
 - a) The principal will inform as many parents as possible of a decision to cancel bus service through the use of regional media outlets such as CBC radio, CKLB FM in Yellowknife and others as appropriate;
 3. Principals must take extra caution sending children home from school during inclement weather conditions by arranging responsible accompaniment home for
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younger children by older brothers or sisters, relatives or staff or calling parents to pickup their children.

Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act, 117; NWTTA/GNWT Collective Agreement 22.02

Approval Dates: 1992; Revised 1998; Revised May 20th, 2009.

Policy Title: Emergency Evacuation Procedures for Schools

Policy Statement:

The TCSA recognizes that a timely and orderly emergency evacuation of the school building in an emergency is necessary to ensure the safety of staff and students. Each school must develop and routinely practice emergency evacuation procedures to ensure that both staff and students are ready to evacuate the school safely in the event of an emergency.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of staff and students through the development and routine practice of a school based emergency evacuation plan.

Procedures:

1. The principal shall ensure that a school wide emergency evacuation plan exists for the school. The principal shall make every effort to work in cooperation with parents, staff and interagency support services in order to revise an existing evacuation plan or to develop a new school evacuation plan;
 2. School evacuation plans should identify an emergency shelter for students, staff and visitors in the event of an evacuation during extreme weather conditions. Special care must be taken by principals when elders are in the building;
 3. The principal shall have four fire drills/emergency exit drills during each school year. Two fire/evacuation drills will take place during the fall and two will take place during the spring;
 4. The principal shall report on fire/evacuation drills in month end reports to the district board office;
 5. The principal shall maintain documentation of fire/evacuation drills, note
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evacuation time and any concerns regarding routines, practice or equipment pertaining to the evacuation drill;

6. Concerns shall be addressed and corrected in a timely manner;
7. In communities where there is a fire department, evacuation drills should be arranged in conjunction with the fire chief when possible.

Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act, 117; Hospital Insurance & Health and Social Services Administration Act, 10(10), 13(1)

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.

TCSA Policies & Procedures

Section 4: Programs & Services / Education

Reference: 4.304

Policy Title: **Emergency Lockdown Procedures for Schools**

Policy Statement:

The TCSA has an obligation to ensure reasonable measures are established and practiced in order to protect students and staff in the event of an internal or external threat to their safety.

The TCSA recognizes the need to ensure student safety during a school emergency by timely and orderly action by all staff and students. Each school must develop and routinely practice emergency lockdown procedures in order that both staff and students are ready to effectively respond to an internal or external threat requiring the staff and students to hide from danger until the threat is removed.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure student and staff safety by providing clear guidelines for the development and routine practice of a school based lockdown plan.

Procedures:

1. The principal shall ensure that an emergency lockdown plan exists for the school. The principal shall make every effort to work in cooperation with parents, staff and interagency support services in order to revise an existing lockdown plan, or to develop a new school lockdown plan;
 2. The principal shall provide a copy of the lockdown plan to the TCSA on an annual basis in September;
 3. The principal shall have two lockdown drills during each school year;
 4. The principal shall report on lockdown drills in month end reports to the district board office;
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5. The principal shall maintain an emergency response binder of lockdown drills, noting any concerns regarding routines, practice or equipment pertaining to the lockdown drill. Concerns shall be addressed and corrected in a timely manner;
 6. In communities where there is a police detachment, lockdown drills should be arranged in conjunction with the police department, or if possible coordinated with an expected community visit by a police office;
 7. The principal may provide the nearest RCMP detachment with a copy of the school lockdown policy.
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Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act, 117; Hospital Insurance & Health and Social Services Administration Act, 10(10), 13(1)

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.

Policy Title: **Safe Schools & Security Surveillance Cameras**

Policy Statement:

The TCSA has the responsibility to foster a safe school environment for students and staff, and to make every effort to protect school property from theft, trespassing and vandalism. The Agency recognizes that video surveillance can be a valuable tool for addressing vandalism, theft and inappropriate student behavior in the school setting, if reasonable privacy concerns are addressed.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines for the use of video surveillance equipment in schools for the purpose of protecting school property and fostering a safe school environment while addressing legitimate privacy concerns.

Procedures:

1. With the permission of the Director and/or CEO, the school principal may install and use video cameras to monitor and/or record activity within schools and on school buses;
2. The principal is responsible for the proper implementation and control of the video surveillance system in the school setting;
3. The principal or site manager is responsible for the proper use of video cameras on school buses;
4. The operation of a video surveillance system shall be in compliance with all territorial and federal legislation;
5. Video surveillance cameras shall only provide surveillance of areas where a reasonable level of privacy does not exist, such as, but not limited to hallways, classrooms or a school bus. The CEO may grant a temporary short-term exception to this rule;
6. Video surveillance camera locations shall be visible to the public and notification must be displayed to make the public aware of the video surveillance camera system. The CEO may grant a temporary short-term exception to this stipulation;

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7. Only the CEO, school principal and/or a regional and/or school assigned designate shall have unlimited access to monitoring stations, recording devices and recordings.
 8. Limited viewing, so long as the viewing does not unduly infringe on a third parties right to privacy, may be granted by the school principal under the following circumstances in the presence of a school administrator and in accordance with the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act:
 - a) Parents and their advocate may view a segment of a recording that includes their child/children at the request of the parents;
 - b) Adult students and their advocate may view segments of a recording relating to the student in question at the request of the student;
 - c) A staff member facing disciplinary action, and the staff member's union or advocate may view segments of a recording relating to the staff member in question at the request of the staff member;
 - d) Staff or agents responsible for the technical maintenance and operation of the surveillance system may have temporary access to the surveillance camera monitoring stations, recording devices and recordings;
 - e) RCMP may view segments of a recording in the interest of public safety or in response to a criminal investigation;
 9. The RCMP may be granted a permanent video link to the surveillance system for the purpose of protecting the wellbeing of students, staff and responding officers in the event of a life-threatening incident;
 10. The principal may provide a copy of a surveillance camera recording to the CEO, GNWT Risk Management, the RCMP;
 11. When an incident raises a prospect of a legal claim against the TCSA, the superintendent or designate shall send a copy of relevant recordings to Risk Management;
 12. Videotape and digital recordings shall be erased within one month unless they are being retained at the request of the principal, superintendent, a staff member or parent for student documentation related to a specific incident, or transferred to Risk Management or the RCMP;
 13. Videotape and digital recordings retained under section 10 shall be erased as soon as the incident in question has been resolved. If the tape has been used in the making of a decision about an individual, then the tape must be kept for a minimum of one year as required by the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, unless earlier erasure is authorized by or on behalf of the individual;

Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act, 117 ; Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.

TCSA Policies & Procedures

Section 4: Programs and Services /Education

Reference: 4.308

Policy Title:

Student Suspensions & Expulsions

Policy Statement:

The TCSA recognizes that a safe, respectful and caring school environment is essential for student learning.

To meet this goal, it is important that there be consistent and systematic consequences in response to inappropriate student behavior. These must be combined with appropriate creative practices involving school staff, interagency support and parents working together as a team to address and change inappropriate student behavior.

Purpose:

The TCSA believes that the application of proactive best practices to encourage appropriate student behavior is necessary in order to foster the development of a safe, respectful and caring school environment. However, it is equally recognized that suspensions and expulsions remain an option for principals when student behavior meets the criteria as identified in section 35 (1) of the Education Act, in order to promote and maintain a safe, respectful, caring and effective learning environment. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines for student suspensions and expulsions.

Procedures:

1. The principal may suspend students for a period of one to five days for inappropriate student conduct as identified in section 35. (1) of the Education Act.
 2. Suspensions six days to a maximum of twenty days must have the approval of the Superintendent or a designate and must include conditions in accordance with section 35(3) of the Education Act.
 3. The principal shall inform the parents of the suspension, provide a written notice of the suspension to the parents, the classroom teacher, the DEA chairperson and the Superintendent or designate.
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4. A suspension letter must describe the offence, note the violation in accordance with section 35. (1) of the Education Act, the time and date of the suspension, the time and date the student will return to school and inform the parents of their right to appeal the suspension in accordance with section 39 and section 40 of the Education Act.
 5. In circumstances of repeat suspensions, the school principal shall refer the student to a school counselor if available, and notify the parents of the referral in writing. The principal may inform the parents of services that may benefit the student.
 6. Suspension letters are maintained on the students' cumulative record for a period of three years.
 7. When it is in the opinion of the principal that a student should be expelled for the remainder of a school term or the remainder of a school year, the recommendation must be made to the Superintendent or designate, who will investigate the matter to determine whether the expulsion is appropriate, make a decision and notify the principal, the parent and the District Education Authority.
 8. The principal shall ensure that every effort is made to cooperate and work with parents, school staff and other support agencies as a team in order to meet the needs of students that experience habitual reoccurrences of suspension level offences in order to foster the implementation of appropriate and effective proactive student behavior strategies in the school setting.
 9. The student or the parent of the student may appeal a suspension or expulsion in accordance with section 39, 40 and 43 of the Education Act.
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Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act, 35, 36, 39, 40, 43;

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.

TCSA Policies & Procedures

Section 4: Program & Services / Education

Reference: 4.309

Policy Title:

Equipment for Cultural Programs

Policy Statement:

The TCSA has a mandate to operate on the land culture programs designed to teach students the traditional activities, skills and values of the Tlicho people. These programs require equipment such as boats, snowmobiles and power saws.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines for the operation, maintenance and intended use of school culture equipment.

Procedures:

1. Principals may consider the purchase or rental of equipment to support cultural programs depending on the circumstances;
 2. The principal of each school or designate, shall be responsible for the routine inspection and maintenance of all culture equipment, and shall not use equipment that is unfit for safe operation until appropriate repairs can be made to the equipment;
 3. The operation of culture equipment shall comply with local, territorial and federal laws;
 4. Students shall use and be instructed in the appropriate use of safety equipment and clothing as deemed necessary by the particular activities the students will be engaging in, such as properly using life jackets, snowmobile helmets and appropriate outdoor clothing;
 5. The principal may grant the use of culture equipment for the purpose of TCSA staff professional development and for TCSA organized culture programs;
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6. Equipment for Cultural Programs is to be used only for educational purposes to support TCSA programs and shall not be loaned to individuals for personal use;
 7. The principal may grant the use of school equipment to support community culture based educational initiatives.
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Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act, 117.

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.

TCSA Policies & Procedures

Section 4: Programs & Services / Education

Reference: 4.310

Policy Title:

Student Excursions

Policy Statement:

The TCSA recognizes that school sponsored student excursions provide students with real life experiences that are not available in the classroom while parents expect quality, safe education for their children. For this reason, student safety must be a priority when planning student excursions.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of students on field trips by providing planning guidelines and requirements for school staff.

Procedures:

The principal shall ensure that all staff planning and implementing student excursions follow these requirements:

1. A lead teacher must be identified for each school trip;
 2. When planning a school sponsored student excursion every reasonable effort shall be made to accommodate the special needs of every learner in a manner that allows all students to safely and effectively participate in the event;
 3. Appropriate transportation and/or accommodations must be arranged prior to a student excursion in addition to making sufficient arrangements to cover all costs pertaining to the event;
 4. A GNWT Risk Management Student Excursion form shall be completed and submitted to the superintendent by the principal or designate prior to any student excursions that transport students by any type of vehicle. The signing of the Risk Management Student Excursion form notes the principal's approval of the event;
 5. Excursions outside of the Northwest Territories require pre-approval from the superintendent in addition to his/her signature on the Risk
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Management Student Excursion form;

6. A parent-guardian consent form is required for each student participating in a school sponsored student excursion;
7. A principal may provide parents with a local field trip consent form that covers all local field trips within the community for a period of one school year for school sponsored student excursions that do not require the transportation of students and still require notification to the parents in advance of any such event;
8. A consent form is required for each volunteer that participates in a school-sponsored excursion;
9. A travel form is required for each staff member that supervises or otherwise participates in a school sponsored excursion that takes place in whole or in part outside of regular operational hours, and/or for a staff member that provides his or her own transportation to and/or from a school sponsored excursion;
10. Except in the event of an emergency, students and/or staff participating in a school sponsored excursion shall only be transported with school owned vehicles and/or privately owned vehicles that are identified on a GNWT Risk Management Form, with a copy of the insurance policy submitted to the principal. Privately owned vehicles used for student transportation shall have a minimum of one million dollars in liability insurance. The principal, designate or lead teacher on site shall determine if an emergency is sufficient to warrant the transportation of a student in a privately owned vehicle that does not meet the requirements as set forth in this policy;
11. A principal must revoke approval for a school-sponsored excursion if circumstances change and/or new information become evident that calls into question the safety of the participants;
12. A principal may exclude a student from a school sponsored excursion on a case-by-case basis in circumstances pertaining to safety concerns.

Authorities: TCSA Act 13; Education Act.

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.

Policy Title: Student Excursions: GNWT Risk Management

Policy Statement:

The TCSA requires the proper documentation of all student excursions that involve students leaving school grounds using some form of transportation services. In the event that a critical incident occurs during a school excursion, documentation is required to identify the destination, the purpose of the excursion, the dates of the excursion, the mode of transportation as well as identifying the student participants and the names of the supervisors.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for a school principal to properly document student excursions.

Procedures:

1. The principal shall ensure a GNWT Risk Management Student Excursion form is completed and submitted to the CEO/ superintendent prior to a student excursion;
 2. The principal shall keep a school copy of the student excursion form on file;
 3. The principal shall ensure that an excursion form is completed for all student excursions that require the use of transportation services;
 4. The principal shall require that the lead teacher-supervisor edit the student list on the school's copy of the Risk Management Excursion Form immediately prior to an excursion;
 5. The principal shall maintain on file a field trip permission form signed by a parent/guardian for each student that participates in a school excursion;
 6. The principal shall maintain copies of all excursion forms and permission forms for a period of three years after the event;
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7. The principal shall provide copies of all excursion forms and permission forms to the district office at the request of the CEO/superintendent;
 8. The principal shall maintain copies of excursion forms indefinitely for all school excursions involving a critical incident.
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Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act 117

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.

TCSA Policies & Procedures

Section 4: Programs & Services / Education

Reference: 4.312

Policy Title:

Transportation for Student Excursions

Policy Statement:

The TCSA recognizes the importance of ensuring the safe transportation of students and staff and requires that school staff ensure the safe transportation of students when required for school activities.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safe transportation of students in buses and vans when required for school activities.

Procedures:

In addition to federal, territorial and municipal laws regulations and policies, the operation of a vehicle used for the transportation of students and/or staff must comply with the following:

1. A driver shall have a valid operator's license for the class of vehicle he/she is operating;
 2. The driver is responsible at all times for operating the vehicle in a safe and responsible manner which includes following all posted speed limits, and never driving while using a cellphone or a two way radio;
 3. A school bus or van shall not be operated in reverse on school property during operational hours, except when exiting a bay;
 4. Students shall be supervised at all times while on a school vehicle;
 5. The driver shall ensure that a school vehicle left unattended is properly secured in order to prevent unauthorized entry to the vehicle;
 6. The school bus or van driver shall be responsible for the supervision of students on a school bus. The driver shall report to the school principal concerns pertaining to student discipline issues that occur during the transportation process;
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7. The school bus or van driver shall ensure that the number of passengers does not exceed the maximum seating capacity of the vehicle;
 8. A school bus shall only depart from school property during operational hours under the direction of a point person who directs the bus to leave.
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Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act 117.

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.

TCSA Policies & Procedures

Section 4: Programs & Services / Education

Reference: 4.313

Policy Title:

RCMP Investigations of Students

Policy Statement:

The TCSA encourages and supports cooperation between school staff and the RCMP and encourages the fostering of a positive rapport between students and the RCMP. It is the goal of the TCSA to support activities that formulate partnerships with the RCMP to help meet the educational and social needs of the students. For this reason the TCSA encourages RCMP investigations involving student interviews to take place outside of the school environment. However, the TCSA recognize that under certain circumstances the RCMP may request to conduct an interview of students at school.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for a school principal to effectively work with police officers who desire to conduct an interview of a student on school property.

Procedures:

1. The RCMP shall have permission of the parent and/or guardian before a school principal will grant permission for an interview to be conducted at school;
 2. The principal must have verbal or written permission from the parents and/or guardian before a staff member may participate in an interview with a student on behalf of the parent/guardian;
 3. The principal may encourage the RCMP to conduct the interview elsewhere;
 4. The principal shall inform in writing the CEO/Superintendent of the date and time of the interview, the name of the student, the name of the investigating officer, and the fact that the RCMP made the parents aware of the interview;
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5. In circumstances where time is of the essences, and parental /guardian consent is unavailable the RCMP shall conduct the interview in conjunction with social services.
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Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act 117.

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.

TCSA Policies & Procedures

Section 4: Programs & Services / Education

Reference: 4.314

Policy Title:

RCMP & Information Sharing

Policy Statement:

At times the RCMP may need to access and/or acquire school files for the purpose of an investigation. The TCSA encourages and supports cooperation between the school and the RCMP to facilitate the sharing and disclosure of appropriate information in a manner that ensures that the obligations and requirements governing both the school and the RCMP are met.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines governing the sharing of school records with the RCMP in a manner that respects the fundamental rights of each staff member and student.

Procedures:

1. The principal shall provide the RCMP with access to information in a student's or staff member's file to view in the school in accordance with a Production Order – Warrant;
 2. The principal shall provide information in a student's or staff member's file and/or provide copies of the information in the file to the RCMP to be removed from the school in accordance with a Production Order – Warrant;
 3. In response to a Production Order - Warrant to acquire information in a student's or staff member's file, the principal shall offer a certified copy of the information as an alternative to providing the RCMP with original copies;
 4. The principal shall keep on file the Production Order - Warrant requiring access to information and/or the acquisition of files, and in circumstances where files are removed from the school, the principal shall request a timeline for the return of the files, and follow-up in a timely manner on the return of the files to the school;
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5. A Student's Cumulative Record shall not leave the school unless under a Production Order – Warrant. A copy shall be offered to the RCMP as an alternative to providing the original copy.
 6. Except for confidential student or staff information, a principal shall provide the RCMP with information or statements pertaining to an investigation as needed.
 7. The principal shall inform in writing the CEO/Superintendent of the details of the production order - warrant
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Authorities:

TCSA Act 13; Education Act 117.

Approval Dates: June 17th, 2009.
