



TCSA POLICY	
TITLE	Emergency School Closures
POLICY NUMBER	16-07-V2
PROGRAM NAME	Education
DOMAIN NAME	Occupational Health & Safety
EFFECTIVE DATE	June 30, 2023
NEXT REVIEW DATE	June 30, 2026
APPROVAL DATE	June 30, 2023
ISSUING AUTHORITY	Tłchq Community Services Agency
ACCREDITATION STANDARD	N/A

POLICY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The TCSA wishes to minimize the number of instructional interruptions by making every effort to stay open during inclement weather, unplanned cancellations of class, or other disruptions that make opening the school unsafe.

The TCSA recognizes both the Agency and parents share responsibility for the safety of children traveling to and from school during periods of storms, poor visibility, extremely low temperatures, extremely high wind chill factors, school site malfunctions (such as loss of heat or flooding), and other situations caused by inclement weather. Ultimately the responsibility to decide whether conditions are safe to send a child to school or not rests with the parent. Once a student is at school the safety of the student becomes and remains the responsibility of school staff.

PURPOSE/RATIONALE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines to principals to ensure the safety of school children during school closures due to inclement weather conditions, class cancellations, public health, and/or school site malfunctions that impact the school's ability to operate safely.



DEFINITIONS

Emergency school closure - are rare occasions when the school is closed for both students and staff. Reasons for an emergency school closure are extreme weather (schools will not close for cold weather), dangerous conditions in a school (ex: lack of heat or water or sewage, flooding, or fire code concerns), and communicable diseases (in consultation with the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer).

Temperature - are given in degrees Celsius and are actual temperatures and do not include wind chill

SCOPE/APPLICABILITY

This policy will apply to all students and staff in all TCSA schools, including alternative programming.

PROCEDURE

1. Schools in the region shall remain open at all times on school days;
2. An emergency school closure due to a situation resulting from inclement weather must be done in consultation with the community board representative and the TCSA Director of Education. The Minister of Education shall be notified of the closure;
3. In Behchoko, the principal and the bus manager may jointly determine that they are unable 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 radio and social media after receiving approval from the Director of Education;
 - b. Principals must take extra caution sending children home from school during inclement weather conditions by arranging for safe transportation or pick up. Typically, they should activate a phone tree to contact parents to collect their children;
4. Schools will ensure the use of appropriate clothing to provide students the opportunity to go outdoors for breaks and participate in on the land activities. The guideline of -30C shall be used for determining acceptable temperatures for outdoor activities at the discretion of the school principal to set warmer limits for activities or age groups of students;



5. The school principal and school staff remain responsible to ensure the safety of students while in their care, until they are in the custody of their parents/guardians should they be dismissed early.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

NA

CROSS-REFERENCES

TCSA Transportation of Student Policy 4.316

ATTACHMENTS

NA

REFERENCES

- NWT Education Act

APPROVAL

Reviewed and Approved By:

Kevin Armstrong
Chief Executive Office
30-June-2023

Reviewed and Approved By:

Ted Blondin
TCSA Chairperson
30-June-2023