

Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services

Operational Procedures



Title: INCLEMENT WEATHER
Procedure: HWSTS-OP-0107-10
Adopted: August 26, 2010
Revised:

1.0 Scope

It is the practice of HWSTS to provide safe transportation to and from school daily under the direction of the member Boards. Due to the commitment to safety, inclement weather may result in service cancellations throughout the school year.

In collaboration with all stakeholders, inclement weather decisions will be made by the partner Boards Directors of Education with student safety first and foremost. Decisions will be communicated to internal stakeholders and to local media to inform the parent / school community and general public.

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2.0 Responsibility

2.1 The HWSTS Bus Operators are responsible for:

- Maintaining up to date reference tools outlining the inclement weather routes
- Ensuring designated spotters are in place to drive the inclement weather routes when requested by HWSTS
- Providing timely information and feedback from their spotters to HWSTS

2.2 The Partner Boards' Directors of Education / designate is responsible for:

- Reaching the decision whether schools shall be closed / transportation cancelled
- Ensuring HWSTS is aware of the decision

2.3 The HWSTS General Manager / designate is responsible for:

- Monitoring weather / road conditions and forecasts
- Requesting spotters drive the inclement weather routes
- Liaising with the bus operators regarding conditions
- Reporting findings to Directors of Education / designate
- Communicate decision by Director of Education / designate to bus operators and staff

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3.0 Procedure

3.1 Preamble

Inclement weather decisions are a sensitive topic throughout the Province and for the most part, some people will disagree with the decision reached regardless of what it was. As the front line information gathering source, the responsibility of HWSTS is to support the process and relay the most up-to-date and accurate information to the Directors of Education reaching the final decision.

3.2 Overview

Throughout the school year HWSTS shall monitor weather & road conditions from a safety perspective. During times when inclement weather has been forecast for the region, HWSTS staff will monitor weather conditions using the internet, local radio stations and the TV. If HWSTS feels that the potential is high for some severe weather, the bus operators are contacted and put on notice that they will need to inform their "spotters" that they will need to go out in the morning.

3.3 Spotter duties

In accordance with the reporting timeframe, the "spotters" will drive their predetermined inclement weather routes. These routes were developed several years ago in consultation with school principals, members of parent councils and parents. The "spotters" are to report back their findings on visibility, road conditions, precipitation accumulation and any other related information to their manager or designate for their bus operator. Once all "spotters" have reported back, the bus operator Manager or designate will assess all the reports received and contact the General Manager of HWSTS or designate to report back their findings. All operators are required to report back to HWSTS between 5:30am and no later than 5:45am.

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3.4 HWSTS designate duties

General Manager or designate will contact the Directors of Education both partner boards to relay the reported findings from the bus operator spotters re: visibility, road conditions, precipitation accumulation and any other related information.

3.5 In the event of Cancellation / School Closure

The Directors of Education shall consult together regarding the reported information they have received and reach a decision regarding closing schools / cancelling transportation. In the event that they have jointly decided to close schools for the day, they will inform the General Manager of HWSTS or designate of the decision and each Board's communication staff shall inform the media that schools will be closed / transportation has been cancelled. The information is then relayed to the local radio and TV stations as well as a message will posted on the boards web page.

The manager of HWSTS or designate will contact all bus operators and HWSTS staff informing them of the closure.

3.6 In the event of no Cancellation / School Closure

Should both directors decide to keep schools open, they will inform the General Manager of HWSTS or designate of the decision and the message will be relayed to all bus operators of the decision. Bus operators will continue to monitor conditions and report any delays or issue to HWSTS.

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4.0 Definitions

Term	Definition
HWSTS	Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services Consortium
HWSTS Staff	All partner Board staff designated to the Consortium to support student transportation operations
Bus Operator	Contracted organization providing student transportation services to HWSTS
Spotter	Designated individual employed by a bus operator responsible to drive the inclement weather routes when requested and report back findings & conditions
Partner Boards	The two Boards listed on the HWSTS agreement – the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board and the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board