



CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

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Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

RE: TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER & OTHER EVENTS

Winter is fast approaching and there may be times when the weather and other events will cause school bus and special vehicle transportation to be disrupted. The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario is working cooperatively with Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario (STEO) bus contractors and our coterminous Board to ensure that our approach to transportation during these times is coordinated and planned with the safety of students in mind. STEO receives up-to-date information regarding local weather and road conditions from Meteogroup, a global weather advisor. Decisions concerning the cancellation of school bus and special vehicle transportation are made cooperatively based upon this information. Unless otherwise announced, schools will remain **open** for students and staff, even if transportation is cancelled. If transportation services are cancelled in the morning, transportation services will also **not** operate in the afternoon.

Announcements regarding the cancellation of school bus and special vehicle transportation will be broadcasted starting at 6:15 a.m. on your local radio station.

Alternatively, parents/guardians and students can verify if buses are cancelled by accessing STEO's website at www.steo.ca and visit the "View Bus Delays & Cancellations" link. Information is also available on the CDSBEO Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CDSBEO) and Twitter feed (@CDSBEO), and on our website at www.cdsbeo.on.ca. Please do not call the bus companies as the radio and website reflect the most accurate information.

Winter weather conditions can change suddenly. If roads become impassable during the school day or they are judged to be risky, students will be kept at school until either their parents can pick them up or it becomes safe to resume school bus transportation.

Fog

Occasionally, regardless of the time of year, fog patches occur. Fog greatly increases the risk that motorists may collide with a stopped vehicle or with a student in the process of crossing a road to board the bus. Consequently, bus drivers have been instructed not to stop in fog patches where visibility is significantly reduced. If a student is not picked up due to foggy conditions, the bus driver will provide the names of those students to the school principal upon arrival at the school. **We recommend that you do not permit your child to wait for the bus if visibility is significantly reduced by fog.**

Blocked Roads

Occasionally, a road may become blocked; as a result, the bus may be unable to service sections of a route. If this occurs, the bus driver will communicate the name of each student who was not picked up, to the school principal, upon arrival at the school.

A reminder, that you are responsible for your child's safety prior to boarding the school bus and following drop off. You are encouraged to ensure that your child has access to your home or to an approved alternative home where he/she can go in the event of the bus being unable to service your section of the route.

Mechanical Breakdown

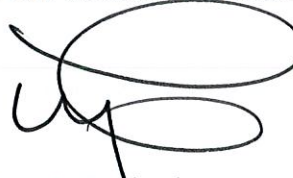
The possibility of a mechanical breakdown of a school bus or special vehicle always exists. This is a particular concern during the winter. Please ensure that your child is dressed warmly enough to cope with the potential loss of heat due to a mechanical breakdown on the bus. If mechanical failure occurs, alternative transportation will be arranged as soon as possible. If this occurs, the bus may be late picking up your child in the morning or returning him/her home in the afternoon.

Parental Responsibility

STEO strives to ensure the safe transportation of children. It is each parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is safely aboard the school bus. Ultimately, each parent has the right and obligation to protect their child. ***You may decide to keep your child at home if you feel that it is too risky to have him/her transported to school.***

Your support and cooperation are appreciated as we approach another winter.

Yours in Catholic education,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W. J. Gartland', written over a large, light-colored oval shape.

Wm. J. Gartland
Director of Education