

## Cancellation of School and Board Administrative Operations Procedure

### RATIONALE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students and employees. Therefore, inclement weather, extreme weather, emergency condition, or a City of Hamilton emergency may occasionally result in the delay or cancellation of transportation services and/or the closure of schools.

HWDSB strives to ensure that all schools and workplaces are open every instructional/operational day to meet the needs of students and the community.

### TERMINOLOGY:

*Inclement Weather:* A day where road or weather conditions make it dangerous to operate a school bus or private vehicle safely.

*Prolonged:* An interruption of service that is confirmed to be so long that, in the judgment of the Director or Designate/Members of Executive Council, school and/or board administrative operations cannot continue.

*Parent:* "Parent" has the same legal meaning as guardian.

*Supervisory Officer:* A member of Executive Council with service department supervisory responsibilities.

*Cluster Superintendent:* A member of Executive Council with school supervisory responsibilities.

*City of Hamilton Emergency:* Any situation within the city limits of Hamilton where the City of Hamilton has officially invoked its Emergency Plan.

*Emergency Condition:* A breakdown in essential services, such as, but not limited to hydro, heat and/or water, or other conditions whereby the safety of students, staff and other building occupants would be compromised.

*Extreme Temperature:* Weather that does not warrant the declaration of an inclement weather day. Extreme weather includes but is not limited to, extreme cold weather with wind chill or extreme hot weather with high humidex.

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### PROCEDURES:

#### **1.0 Cancellation of Transportation and All School and Board Administrative Operations Before the Commencement of School and Board Administrative Operations**

##### 1.1 Inclement Weather Conditions

- 1.1.1 If HWDSB experiences inclement weather, the General Manager of the Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System will advise the Director or Designate of the road conditions and weather conditions.
- 1.1.2 The Director of Education or Designate will then decide whether or not to cancel all school and board administrative operations.
- 1.1.3 If the conditions are determined to be unsafe and transportation is cancelled, the Director of Education or Designate will then inform Corporate Communications and the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System of the cancellation of all school and board administrative operations.
- 1.1.4 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.
- 1.1.5 The Director or Designate will make every effort to cancel all school and board administrative operations by 6:00 a.m.

##### 1.2 Prolonged Hydro Interruption

- 1.2.1 If the interruption of hydro services is anticipated to be prolonged, The Director of Education or Designate will then inform Executive Council, Corporate Communications and the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System of the cancellation of all school and board administrative operations.
- 1.2.2 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.
- 1.2.3 Child care centres will normally remain open until their usual closing time.
- 1.2.4 The Director or Designate will make every effort to cancel all school and board administrative operations by 6:00 a.m. in order to inform the media by 6:30 a.m.

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### 1.3 City of Hamilton Emergency

- 1.3.1 If the City of Hamilton declares a city-wide emergency, The Director of Education or Designate will then inform Executive Council, Corporate Communications and the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System of the cancellation of all school and board administrative operations.
- 1.3.2 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.
- 1.3.3 Child care centres will normally remain open until their usual closing time.
- 1.3.4 The Director or Designate will make every effort to cancel all school and board administrative operations by 6:00 a.m. in order to inform the media by 6:30 a.m.

### 2.0 Cancellation of Transportation Due to Extreme Temperature

- 2.1 If the temperature reaches extreme cold, the General Manager of the Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System will advise the Director or Designate of the status of the bus fleet.
- 2.2 The Director of Education or Designate will then decide whether or not to cancel all school and board administrative operations or just transportation.
- 2.3 The Director of Education or Designate will then inform Corporate Communications and the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System of the decision.
- 2.4 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.
- 2.5 The Director or Designate will make every effort to cancel all school and board administrative operations, or transportation by 6:00 a.m.

### 3.0 Cancellation of All School and Board Administrative Operations after the Commencement of School and Board Administrative Operations

- 3.1 Severe/Worsening Weather Conditions

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- 3.1.1 Severe/worsening weather across the District or in any part of the District may result in a recommendation to cancel all school and board administrative operations and to dispatch transportation services to schools across the entire District.
  - 3.1.2 If the weather has become very severe, The Director of Education or Designate will then decide whether or not to cancel all school and board administrative operations.
  - 3.1.3 If the conditions are determined to be unsafe, The Director of Education or Designate will then inform Executive Council, Corporate Communications and the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System of the cancellation of all school and board administrative operations.
  - 3.1.4 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.
  - 3.1.5 Child care centres will normally remain open until their usual closing time.
  - 3.1.6 The Director or Designate will make every effort to cancel all school and board administrative operations by 11:00 a.m. Normally, the Director or Designate will not cancel school operations after 11:00 a.m.
- 3.2 Prolonged Hydro Interruption
- 3.2.1 A prolonged hydro interruption across the District may result in a recommendation to cancel all school and board administrative operations and to dispatch transportation services to schools across the entire District.
  - 3.2.2 If the interruption of hydro services is anticipated to be prolonged, The Director of Education or Designate will then inform Executive Council, Corporate Communications and the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System of the cancellation of all school and board administrative operations.
  - 3.2.3 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.
  - 3.2.4 Child care centres will normally remain open until their usual closing time.

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3.2.5 The Director or Designate will make every effort to cancel all school and board administrative operations by 11:00 a.m. Normally, the Director or Designate will not cancel school operations after 11:00 a.m.

### 3.3 City of Hamilton Emergency

3.3.1 A City of Hamilton emergency may result in a recommendation to cancel all school and board administrative operations and to dispatch transportation services to schools across the entire District.

3.3.2 If the City of Hamilton emergency warrants, the Director of Education or Designate will then inform Executive Council, Corporate Communications and the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System of the cancellation of all school and board administrative operations.

3.3.3 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.

3.3.4 Child care centres will normally remain open until their usual closing time.

3.3.5 The Director or Designate will make every effort to cancel all school and board administrative operations by 11:00 a.m. Normally, the Director or Designate will not cancel school operations after 11:00 a.m.

### 4.0 Cancellation of School Operations After the Commencement of School Operations

4.1 Once school operations commence, every effort will be made to dismiss students at their normal dismissal time.

4.2 The Director of Education or Designate will advise the Cluster Superintendent, who will inform cluster principals by e-mail, phone or fax that school operations will be cancelled.

4.3 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.

4.4 The principal will inform staff and students. The principal will implement the School Cancellation Student Contingency Plan.

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4.5 The principal and an adequate number of staff members, including the caretaker will remain at school to ensure the security of the building and until reasonably assured that all students have had an opportunity to arrive home safely.

4.6 The Board will suspend the Arrivals Check Policy when school operations have been cancelled.

### 5.0 School Cancellation Student Contingency Plan

5.1 It is the duty of the principal to prepare, by the end of September each year, a School Cancellation Student Contingency Plan that will provide for the care and safety of students.

5.2 The plan should include procedures for an emergency early dismissal and procedures regarding any other issues that would need to be addressed including a communication plan for parents.

5.3 By the end of September, and as new students enrol; the principal shall inform parents, in writing (newsletter/website), about the School Cancellation Student Contingency Plan.

5.4 Principals will help keep parents prepared for this situation by providing regular newsletter/website updates about the contingency plan during the winter months.

5.5 The principal will provide the following statement to parents:

“It is the parents’ responsibility to decide whether or not it is safe for their child/ren to attend school. It is the responsibility of parents to arrange alternative arrival plans if their child/ren cannot go home during an unscheduled school cancellation. The parent is expected to clearly explain the alternative to the child and to inform the school, in writing of the alternative arrangements. Parents are requested to provide the school with any changes to these arrangements throughout the school year.”

5.6 The plan will advise parents to check the following sources for current emergency information:

KLITE FM                    102.9 FM  
CJXY-Y108 FM 107.9 FM  
CHAM                        820 AM  
CHML                        900 AM  
Oldies 1150                1150 AM  
CHKX-KX94.7.FM        94.7 FM  
CKPC Brantford        1380 AM or 92.1 FM  
CHCH Hamilton  
CP24 Toronto  
[www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca)

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### **6.0 Cancellation of Individual School or Individual Board Administrative Operations Before the Commencement of School and/or Board Administrative Operations**

#### 6.1 Loss of Power and/or Water

- 6.1.1 Principals, managers or supervisors must contact their respective supervisory officer and their respective Area Supervisor to inform them of the loss of power and/or water.
- 6.1.2 The Area Supervisor will contact the appropriate utility company to attempt to determine the length of time that will be required to remedy the problem.
- 6.1.3 The supervisory officer will advise the Director of Education or Designate who will decide whether to cancel operations at the facility.
- 6.1.4 The Director of Education or Designate will notify the supervisory officer who will notify the principal, manager or supervisor of the decision.
- 6.1.5 In the event that the Cluster Superintendent notifies a principal to cancel school operations, the Cluster Superintendent will inform the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System and Corporate Communications.
- 6.1.6 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.

#### 6.2 Gas Leak

- 6.2.1 Upon suspecting a gas leak principals, managers or supervisors must ensure that students and/or staff have evacuated the building, must call 911 and must ask for Fire Department assistance.
- 6.2.2 Principals, managers or supervisors must contact their respective supervisory officer and their respective Area Supervisor to inform them of the suspected gas leak and the evacuation.
- 6.2.3 The Area Supervisor will contact the appropriate utility company to attempt to determine the length of time that will be required to remedy the problem.
- 6.2.4 The supervisory officer will advise the Director of Education or Designate who will decide whether to cancel operations at the facility.

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- 6.2.5 The Director of Education or Designate will notify the supervisory officer who will notify the principal, manager or supervisor of the decision.
- 6.2.6 In the event that the Cluster Superintendent notifies a principal to cancel school operations, the Cluster Superintendent will inform the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System and Corporate Communications.
- 6.2.7 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.

### 6.3 Localized City of Hamilton Emergency

- 6.3.1 In the event that the City of Hamilton declares an emergency in a localized area within the District, principals, managers or supervisors must contact their supervisory officer to inform them of the emergency.
- 6.3.2 The supervisory officer will advise the Director of Education or Designate who will decide whether to cancel operations at the facility.
- 6.3.3 The Director of Education or Designate will notify the supervisory officer who will notify the principal, manager or supervisor of the decision.
- 6.3.4 In the event that the Cluster Superintendent notifies a principal to cancel school operations, the Cluster Superintendent will inform the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System and Corporate Communications.
- 6.3.5 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.

## **7.0 Cancellation of Individual School or Individual Board Administrative Operations After the Commencement of School and/or Board Administrative Operations**

### 7.1 Loss of Power and/or Water

- 7.1.1 Principals, managers or supervisors must contact their respective supervisory officer and their respective Area Supervisor to inform them of the loss of power and/or water.



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- 7.1.2 The Area Supervisor will contact the appropriate utility company to attempt to determine the length of time that service will be interrupted and/or the problem remedied.
  - 7.1.3 The supervisory officer will advise the Director of Education or Designate who will decide whether to cancel operations at the facility.
  - 7.1.4 The Director of Education or Designate will notify the supervisory officer who will notify the principal, manager or supervisor of the decision.
  - 7.1.5 In the event that the Cluster Superintendent notifies the principal to cancel school operations, the Cluster Superintendent will inform the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System and Corporate Communications.
  - 7.1.6 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.
  - 7.1.7 The principal will implement the School Cancellation Student Contingency Plan in the event that the Cluster Superintendent notifies the principal to cancel school operations.
  - 7.1.8 The principal and an adequate number of staff members, including the caretaker will remain at school to ensure the security of the building and until reasonably assured that all students have had an opportunity to arrive home safely.
  - 7.1.9 The Board will suspend the Arrivals Check Policy when school operations have been cancelled.
- 7.2 Gas Leak
- 7.2.1 Upon suspecting a gas leak principals, managers or supervisors must ensure that students and/or staff have evacuated the building, must call 911 and must ask for Fire Department assistance.
  - 7.2.2 Principals, managers or supervisors must contact their respective supervisory officer and their respective Area Supervisor to inform them of the suspected gas leak and the evacuation.
  - 7.2.3 The Area Supervisor will contact the appropriate utility company to attempt to determine the length of time that will be required to remedy the problem.

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- 7.2.4 The supervisory officer will advise the Director of Education or Designate who will decide whether to cancel operations at the facility.
  - 7.2.5 The Director of Education or Designate will notify the supervisory officer who will notify the principal, manager or supervisor of the decision.
  - 7.2.6 In the event that the Cluster Superintendent notifies the principal to cancel school operations, the Cluster Superintendent will inform the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System and Corporate Communications.
  - 7.2.7 Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website.
  - 7.2.8 The principal will implement the School Cancellation Student Contingency Plan in the event that the Cluster Superintendent decides to cancel school operations.
  - 7.2.9 The principal and an adequate number of staff members, including the caretaker will remain at school to ensure the security of the building and until reasonably assured that all students have had an opportunity to arrive home safely.
  - 7.2.10 The Board will suspend the Arrivals Check Policy when school operations have been cancelled.
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