

Inclement Weather Bus Procedures

Christ The Redeemer Catholic Schools

When we anticipate potentially unsafe driving conditions the Transportation Department at Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools, in consultation with Southland Transportation, will begin monitoring the weather early in the morning. We will use information gathered from various environmental agencies as well as reports from drivers and individuals in each area to determine if bus service should be cancelled.

The final decision to send a child to the bus stop or to school rests solely with the parents, even though buses and schools may be operational. If buses are operating and parents choose to send their children to the bus stop, parents are responsible for the safety and well-being of their children until such time as their children board the bus in the morning and once their children depart the bus at the end of the school day. Buses can be delayed due to weather and road conditions and parents should ensure the following if sending their children to the bus stop on inclement weather days:

1. If parents are sending older children to the bus stop alone they need an emergency plan should the bus not arrive on time. Parents need to ensure their children are able to follow it if need be. Example: children need to know how long to wait at the bus stop and what to do if their bus does not show up on time (return home, call parent, go to neighbors home, etc.);
2. Parents should never leave young children unattended at the bus stop – if your child is not old enough to follow an emergency plan then they are not old enough to be left alone at the bus stop at any time;
3. Parents need to ensure children are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions.

Area-wide cancellation of RURAL bus services:

Morning cancellations:

If rural bus service is cancelled by the Transportation Department and Southland in any area of our division the following will occur:

1. Drivers will contact affected families directly as soon as they are safely able to do so;
2. Information will be posted on our Facebook page. Our goal is to do so no later than 6:30 a.m. whenever possible;
3. Schools will send out a mass e-mail notification to their school community advising them of the transportation status;
4. If buses are cancelled area-wide in the morning, buses in the same area will not run in the afternoon as well. If parents choose to drive their children to school when area bus service is cancelled, they will be responsible to pick them up at the end of the day as well;

End of day cancellations:

If weather should deteriorate after students have arrived at school, students will not be dismissed early as parents may not be home and we do not want to send students, especially young students, home to an empty house. In this situation parents are encouraged to pick up their children early from school so that they can get safely home before the roads become impassable.

If the decision is made to not operate buses at the end of the day due to weather or road conditions, each principal will have a contingency plan in place. This can include contacting parents to see if they are able to pick their children up, getting permission for students to stay with family or friends in town, or making arrangements to accommodate students at the school overnight if necessary.

Individual RURAL bus route cancellation by driver:

Morning cancellations:

Specific rural bus routes may be cancelled when the driver feels it is unsafe to operate due to weather or road conditions. The following will occur if a driver feels it is unsafe to run their route:

1. Driver will contact affected families directly as soon as they are safely able to do so;
2. If a driver cancels a specific route in the morning that route will run in the afternoon unless the driver advises families otherwise;
3. If a driver advises families that the route will not run in the afternoon and parents choose to drive their children to school, parents will be responsible to pick them up at the end of the day as well;

If a driver feels it is not safe to travel a portion of their rural route due to weather or road conditions they have the right to either cancel that portion of their route or make arrangements for families to meet the bus at an alternate location that is safe for the bus to stop. The driver or Southland dispatch will contact families if this situation arises.

End of day cancellations of specific routes by drivers:

If the driver determines it is not safe to do their specific route due to weather or road conditions, and time permits, drivers will advise families on their routes to find out who will be able to pick up their children or make alternate arrangements for their children. The driver will inform Southland of their decision to not do their afternoon run as well as the arrangements that are made for each student. Southland will advise the Transportation Department and the school. Each principal will have a contingency plan in place in case the driver is not able to notify all parents. This can include contacting parents to see if they are able to pick their children up, getting permission for students to stay with family or friends in town, or making arrangements to accommodate students at the school overnight if necessary.

If a driver feels it is not safe to travel a portion of their rural route due to weather or road conditions they have the right to cancel that portion of their route or make arrangements for families to meet the bus at an alternate location that is safe for the bus to stop. The driver or Southland dispatch will contact families if this situation arises.

In Town bus service:

In town bus service is rarely cancelled due to inclement weather. However, should the need arise to cancel in town bus service the above listed procedures will apply.

Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools believes that schools in our division have the responsibility to remain open. As such, schools will remain open on inclement weather days even when buses are not running, but often will not operate regular instructional plans on these days. Parents are encouraged to keep their children at home on these days if at all possible.