

# 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 and the “In the News” section on the main page of our website. Our goal is to do so no later than 6:30 a.m. whenever possible;
3. Bus cancellations are also posted on the transportation section of our website, under *Route Status*.
4. Families who have subscribed to our automated notification system will also receive text and/or e-mail notification of any change that is posted to our Route Status section. We ask all bus families to subscribe to this automated system. To sign up for automated notification service please follow the links:
  - a. For e-mail notification - <http://www.redeemer.ab.ca/Subscribe%20Email.php>; and
  - b. For text notification - <http://www.redeemer.ab.ca/Subscribe%20Text.php>

These are free services, and your e-mail address and cell number will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

5. 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.

In the rare circumstance that the decision is made by the Transportation Department and Southland to not operate rural 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. Drivers will be asked to assist in contacting families in

this situation. Information regarding afternoon cancellations will be posted on Facebook and our webpage and notifications will be sent via text and e-mail if parents have signed up to receive notifications. Again, to sign up for free and secure automated notifications please follow the links:

- a. For e-mail notification - <http://www.redeemer.ab.ca/Subscribe%20Email.php>; and
- b. For text notification - <http://www.redeemer.ab.ca/Subscribe%20Text.php>

**Individual RURAL bus route cancellation by driver:**

*Morning cancellations:*

Specific rural bus routes may be cancelled when a driver, in consultation with Southland Transportation, feels it is unsafe to operate due to weather or road conditions. The following will occur if the driver and Southland Transportation feel it is unsafe to run a specific route:

1. Driver will contact affected families directly as soon as they are safely able to do so;
2. If a specific route is cancelled 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 in the morning due to weather or road conditions they may 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 will consult with Southland Transportation before making this determination. The Southland Dispatch Office or the driver will contact families if this situation arises.

*End of day cancellations of specific routes by drivers:*

If a driver, in consultation with Southland Transportation, 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 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 at the end of the school day due to weather or road conditions they may 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 will consult with Southland Transportation before making any such determination. The driver or Southland Dispatch Office will contact families if this situation arises.

If CTR's Transportation Department is notified of the cancellation of a specific route by a driver, information will be posted on Facebook and our webpage and notifications will be sent via text and e-mail if parents have signed up to receive notifications.

**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 may not operate regular instructional plans on these days. Parents are encouraged to keep their children at home on these days if at all possible.