



Media Release

For Immediate Release
December 1, 2020

Inclement Weather Plans for Grand Erie in 2020-21

Brantford, Ont. – As the calendar turns to December and snow becomes part of the daily forecast, Grand Erie District School Board is reminding students, staff and families of how the Board deals with inclement weather.

“While we generally average only one or two snow days per year, we want our community to understand how we will operate when winter weather hits,” said JoAnna Roberto, Director of Education.

Grand Erie’s Inclement Weather Policy (FT7), found on the board’s website [here](#), was updated in May 2019. The policy outlines the procedures for the cancellation of transportation services, which typically triggers school closures – either by zone or across the whole district.

“Our focus is always on the safety and well-being of students,” said Roberto. “The decision to cancel transportation is made when Student Transportation Services believes the forecasted road conditions will not allow for the safe delivery of services during the morning or afternoon commute when we have thousands of students on buses. Transportation is also cancelled when visibility is expected to be significantly impacted.”

Student Transportation Services Brant Haldimand Norfolk (STSBHN) provides transportation services for Grand Erie students as well as those from the local Catholic and French Catholic boards. During the winter months, STSBHN gathers information on road and weather conditions from various sources, including City and County road crews as well as weather specialists. These road and weather conditions are then discussed with the Superintendents of Business and Directors of Education at each of the three school boards.

When student transportation services are cancelled due to inclement weather, there are two options: closure of all Grand Erie schools or closure by zone. Grand Erie has four zones: Norfolk County (Zone 1), Haldimand County (Zone 2), Brant County (Zone 3) and City of Brantford (Zone 4). Grand Erie students from Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation are included in Zone 2.

When student transportation services are cancelled, Grand Erie schools are closed to all students and staff. This year, closures will also impact Grand Erie students in the Virtual Academy as teachers and other staff operating online classes do so from school buildings.

“Where possible, impacted students will be provided with asynchronous learning on inclement weather days to support the continuity of learning on Brightspace,” said Roberto. “These learning opportunities are optional and will provide families with learning when schools are closed.”

The decision to cancel student transportation services due to inclement weather is made by 6:30 a.m. If Grand Erie schools are closed, the decision will be posted on the board's website (www.granderie.ca), Twitter account (@GEDSB) and shared with local media. No decision will be posted if schools are open. STSBHN will also communicate closures to riders, post on Twitter (@STSBHN) and share on their phone line (519-751-7532).

Grand Erie's Inclement Weather Policy also allows for the option to cancel transportation services when there is extreme cold weather. In this case, student transportation services would be cancelled, however, all Grand Erie schools would remain open to students and staff.

Extreme cold weather negatively impacts the operation of buses. Extreme cold weather in Grand Erie's Inclement Weather policy is defined as -30 degrees Celsius (without wind-chill) at 5 a.m. or a high risk of frostbite (10 minutes or less) as of 5:45 a.m.

Grand Erie District School Board represents nearly 18,000 students in 58 elementary schools and more than 7,300 students in 14 secondary schools within the city of Brantford and the counties of Brant, Haldimand, and Norfolk as well as secondary students from Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

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