



Comox Valley Schools (SD71)

Board of Education

607 Cumberland Road
Courtenay, B.C. V9N 7G5
Fax (250) 334 5552
Telephone (250) 334 5500

School Closures and Bus Schedules during Inclement Weather / Power Outage

When the season of inclement weather is upon us, it is helpful for parents and the community to understand how we come to make a decision on the closure of schools and how it relates to bus schedules.

Each day, we have over 2,000 students travel by bus to attend school. Buses in the morning begin routes at approximately 6:45 a.m. and begin picking children up by about 7:00 a.m. In the afternoon, most buses are on the road by 2:00 p.m. Ensuring the efficient operations of each route in a timely fashion is of great importance to the district.

If there is snowfall overnight and accumulating in the morning, we make every attempt to make a call about school closures prior to the morning pickup of children by the buses. If we do not make the call by this time then students are on their way to school and we need to be prepared to receive and care for them. It is extremely difficult for us to make a call on school closures as late as 8:00 a.m. as it is long past the time buses have commenced on the routes.

If there is snowfall accumulation during the day, we need to ensure the safe return of children their homes or place of care. Many parents are working and cannot pick up their children or the children are too young to be at home alone. We would need to then contact all parents to let them know that their children are returning home early. For these reasons we believe that it is better to keep students safely with us in our schools rather than to dismiss early from the school day. We would, in these cases, dismiss at our regular times and bus students home as safely as possible.

On Hornby and Denman Islands, where often distinct and rapid weather changes are experienced, as well as power outages, we may dismiss early but only with the knowledge of parents through a school alerting system (phone calls, emails and/or text messages, as well as an alert on the district website).

We hope this gives parents some information and understanding about our routines that we consider when there is inclement weather or a power outage and we need to close schools. We care about the safety of your children and always want to make the most prudent decision given the conditions. We make these calls with great thought and care, recognizing that weather patterns throughout the Valley can be very different within the school day.

If we do close schools an announcement will be made on our local FM radio stations, 97.3 The Eagle FM (250-703-2200) and 98.9 The Goat FM, (250-331-4033). Parents and staff should listen in to these stations, as well as follow alerts on the district website (www.comoxvalleyschools.ca) as a key source of communications about school closures due to a power outage and snow.