

Series 700 – Noninstructional and Business Services

Policy Title: TRANSPORTATION IN INCLEMENT WEATHER

Policy Code No. 711.8

Because visibility is essential to the safety of students riding a school bus, it will be the policy of the Newton Community School District to use any of the following measures during moderately to severely reduced visibility driving conditions or other extreme weather emergencies.

- a. delay of morning bus routes, one to two hours
- b. use of hard surface routes
- c. cancel school
- d. dismiss early
- e. hold students in schools for parent/guardian pick up or overnight shelter if necessary. In extreme weather conditions such as heavy, dense fog; blowing snow - whiteouts; and heavy freezing rain or ice; or rapidly deteriorating conditions, buses will not operate.

The decision will be based upon whether or not on a school bus the warning lights, strobe light and basic form can be recognized by other drivers within enough time to react and stop (minimum 300 ft. visibility.) It shall be a joint decision between the superintendent or designee and the transportation supervisor, and may change as weather further deteriorates.

Parents/guardians will be advised to listen to local radio (Newton KCOB; 1280am and 95.9fm), check school district website, and television for updated announcements of weather related school schedule changes. It is possible a one-hour delay may be changed to a two-hour delay, or cancellation of school, if weather deteriorates quickly. It is also possible that an early dismissal may change to a “hold for parent/guardian pick up” if weather deteriorates severely.

If buses have already been sent out, and weather conditions deteriorate to what the driver feels is an unsafe situation for a school bus, the driver may:

- a. pull off the roadway to a safe place with hazard lights flashing and wait for conditions to improve;
- b. if necessary, stop and pull in to the next available safe stop and radio for parent/guardian pick up;
- c. if unsafe to stop at a student’s stop because of poor visibility, the driver may request to leave the student with another family on the route. Driver shall notify office and wait for approval;
- d. turn around mid-route, if possible, and bring students back to the school if it is felt to be a risk to continue. Bus drivers are to remain on duty until they are dismissed. Any or all of these decisions by the driver will be respected as a good judgment call for the safety of the students and not an indication of lack of competent driving skill.

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Parents/guardians should be advised that on a morning route, if visibility is poor due to fog or blowing snow at their stop, they should wait with their children in case the bus is unable to stop there. This is especially important for elementary school aged students who may not understand why the bus passed them. All students should be instructed that in poor weather and poor visibility, if their bus passes their stop, they are to go immediately back into their home. It is unsafe to stop a school bus where it can't be seen by other drivers and is especially dangerous to children who must cross the roadway in front of the bus. Parent/guardian attention and cooperation is essential for the safety of their children during these inclement weather conditions.

This policy shall be annually reviewed by the district transportation department and any changes are approved by the Board of Education.

Date of Adoption	08/28/1989
Review Date	06/08/2020
Revision Date	06/08/2020

Legal Ref.: Iowa Code §§ 279.8.

Cross Ref.: 601.2 School Day