

November 2022

TO: Principals / Vice-Principals / Directors/ Managers/ Supervisors

FROM: Pete Nuij – Associate Superintendent, Employee Services

RE: **Policies on school closures due to weather or other conditions**

There may be times when schools and worksites are closed due to weather conditions (such as a heavy snowfall), natural disasters or other emergency situations where the health and / or safety of students and staff may be at risk.

This memo describes the policies and procedures in the three potential scenarios as follows:

1. Schools/worksites remain open when schools are in session.
2. Schools/worksites are closed when schools are in session.
3. Schools/worksites are closed when schools are not in session (such as during spring break or the winter holidays).

The following table summarizes the reporting to work requirements.

Summary of Reporting to Work in the potential school closure scenarios	
Scenario	Employees required to report to work?
1. Schools/worksites remain open during poor weather conditions when schools are in session.	Yes
2. Schools/worksites are closed when schools are in session	Yes – staff designated as providers of emergency services as per the Work-site Closure Plan. No – most staff. Staff <u>not</u> identified as providers of emergency services do not need to report to the worksite.
3. Schools/worksites are closed when schools are not in session.	No – unless designated as providers of emergency services in Work-site Closure Plan

The following information details the procedures to follow in the three scenarios.

SCENARIO 1:

Schools/worksites REMAIN OPEN during poor weather or other conditions when schools are in session.

This applies to a situation when schools or worksites remain open during poor weather conditions, such as after a heavy snowfall.

Please note: We will not send notification out in the event of snow if schools are open.

A) REQUIREMENTS TO REPORT TO WORK

All employees who can safely do so are expected to report to work. If an employee is not able to come to work due to road or other conditions, they must inform their supervisor or administrator as soon as possible. VTF members who cannot safely arrive to work should report their absences on SFE as a “circumstance beyond the employees’ control” (code 124). All other employees who are unable to report to work are required to report their absence on SFE using “banked time” (i.e., vacation, gratuity) or an unpaid short-term personal leave day (SFE Code 117).

B) EMPLOYEES ON CALL/CASUAL EMPLOYEES

Employees on call or casual employees who accepted an assignment but could not make it to work will not be paid.

SCENARIO 2:

Schools/worksites ARE CLOSED when schools are in session.

This applies to a situation when schools or worksites are **closed** due to weather conditions, a natural disaster or other emergency situations that might endanger the health and / or safety of students and staff.

A) NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURE

By 7:00 am, the VSB will post information about snow closure on its website at www.vsb.bc.ca and will inform local media stations, including:

- CKNW (980 AM)
- CBC (690 AM, 105.7 FM)
- CJVB (1470 AM)
- CFHG (96.1 FM)
- CKWX (1130 AM)
- BCTV/Global
- CITY TV

B) INFORMING PARENTS

Please include a notice in your school newsletter or post information on your school website informing parents that they should check the VSB website or listen to the radio/TV stations listed above to learn about **school closures**. Parents should not call media outlets to ask whether schools are closed.

In specific reference to snow closure, please include a separate insert in a newsletter to remind parents how to find out if schools will be closed.

C) WORK-SITE CLOSURE PLAN

As part of their responsibility for ensuring student and employee safety and building security, Principals and Vice-Principals **must develop a Work-site Closure Plan**. This plan should be reviewed annually with staff and the parent advisory council.

The Work-site Closure Plan will:

- Designate employees as providers of emergency services*, and
- Provide for the assignment of IUOE Local 963 staff as follows:
 - All schools: Building Engineer (in smaller schools, the head custodian) or a substitute designate as determined by the Operations Division
 - Large schools: The Building Engineer as well as the Assistant Building Engineer or a substitute designate as determined by the Operations Division.

The Operations Division also has designated maintenance engineers as required. If you have questions about building operations, please contact the Site Building Supervisor in Operations.

***NOTE:** *The employees identified to provide emergency services must include a principal and/or vice-principal. Other staff may be included as per the site-based Closure Plan.*

D) REQUIREMENTS TO REPORT TO WORK

Employees **are not expected to report to work**, unless:

- They have been designated as providers of emergency services in the Work-site Closure Plan or
- They have been specifically requested to come into work by their supervisor for emergency duties.

Employees are not required to record an absence in SFE.

Employees who called in an absence prior to the announcement of the closure will have the absence processed and the appropriate bank will be deducted. This will not be changed or cancelled after the announcement to close schools.

In this case, the employees who are required to report to work will be provided with compensatory time. This does not apply to Principals/Vice-Principals or other management personnel.

E) EMPLOYEES ON CALL

Employees on call who are called in on a school closure day will be paid.

SCENARIO 3:

Schools/worksites ARE CLOSED when schools are not in session.

This applies to a situation when schools are not in session (such as during spring break or over the winter holidays) and are closed due to weather conditions, a natural disaster, or other events.

A) NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURE

A message announcing the school/worksite closure will be posted on the Education Centre switchboard, at 604-713-5000.

Please make sure that staff who are scheduled to work during holiday breaks phone the Education Centre switchboard to learn about school closures.

B) REQUIREMENTS TO REPORT TO WORK

Employees are not expected to report to work, unless:

- They have been designated as providers of emergency services in the Work-site Closure Plan, or
- They have been specifically requested to come into work by their supervisor for emergency duties.

Employees are not required to record an absence in SFE.