

School Closure Protocol
School District # 85 (Vancouver Island North)

Schools in School District # 85 may have to be closed from time to time on regularly scheduled school days (this includes instructional and non instructional days). Reasons for and duration of school closures can vary. Also, all or only some schools may be closed.

Reasons might include conditions arising from unusual weather that make transportation impossible or unsafe, lengthy power outages or water supply problems. This is not an exclusive list as there will, no doubt, be other, unforeseen reasons.

The decision to close schools in circumstances such as these must be made by the Superintendent of Schools (or designate) under the authority of the School Act. Normally, the superintendent will consult with other senior administrative staff.

Communication:

School closure information will be broadcast, if possible, on CBC radio (95.5 FM; 100.5 Port Alice) and local radio (1240AM). It will be posted on the district website. "A Channel" TV and Global TV may also carry information. The Superintendent will be responsible to communicate details of the school closure to each school principal. The principal, in turn, needs to go to the school or arrange for someone else to be there to greet students or staff who may arrive. In addition, each school principal (or teacher in charge) will try to telephone each staff person or begin a staff "fan out" process in an effort to inform all staff of the closure. The Vice-Principal or Principal should also try to contact all teachers-on-call or CUPE replacement workers scheduled to work that day. It is expected that the principal or designate will subsequently report back to the Superintendent before noon. If possible, each staff person should attempt to contact their supervisor to determine if they should report to work. If reporting to your usual worksite is not possible, it may be possible, at the discretion of your supervisor, to fulfill your work obligations at an alternate work site. Buildings that have been closed due to a major and sustained power failure are not safe to occupy.

Loss of Salary - Teachers

If a school or worksite is closed, the following standard will apply. As per section F.6.6 of the collective agreement, teachers will be paid for a school closure of three days or less. Beginning on the fourth day, teachers will not be paid. Teachers who are sick during a school closure will be deducted a sick day. A medical certificate may be required. If you are unsure as to the status of your duty to report to work, check with your supervising principal.

Loss of Pay - CUPE

During school or worksite closures which are declared before the school day begins, the following standard will apply for CUPE workers. Regular and temporary employees in posted positions are entitled to two hours pay on the first day of such closure, whether they have reported to work or not. Employees should not attempt to travel to work if their school or work site is closed. CUPE workers may use a sick day if they were off due to illness. A medical certificate may be required. Banked time or vacation time may be used and must be reported as such on the time sheets. It may be possible, at the discretion of your supervisor, to report to work at another site if there is work available similar to your regular employment for which you are qualified. This would require agreement between your regular supervisor and the supervisor at the alternate site. Check with your regular supervisor regarding this possibility.

This is intended simply as a guide for school closures. We are not able to have a rule for every possible situation. If you have questions related to school or worksite closures, please check with your immediate supervisor who will help to resolve the question or refer the question to the next level for clarification.

Scott Benwell
Superintendent of Schools/CEO

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K. Bedard