



YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Policy and Procedure #665.0, Safe Arrivals and Departures – Elementary Students

Application

Board *Policy and Procedure #665.0, Safe Arrivals and Departures – Elementary Students* outlines the York Region District School Board's commitment to ensuring the safe arrival and departure of all students. It acknowledges and outlines the responsibilities of all school staff, students and parent(s)/guardian(s) and reinforces the importance of ongoing communication between all stakeholders.

Stakeholder Groups with Responsibilities Under this Policy and Procedure

- Board of Trustees
- Director of Education
- Superintendents of Schools
- Public Affairs and Communications Services
- Principals
- School Staff Members
- Students
- Parents

Relationship to Board priorities

Student safety is of paramount importance and is related to every Board priority. When students arrive safely at school, can participate in the learning, and then return home safely to their families, the Board's mission is in action.

Document History and Previous Versions

Approved 1996
Revised 2002
Revised January 2005 (Working Document)
Revised 2007
Working Document April 2013
Revised February 2014

It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both biological/adoptive parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.



Board Policy #665.0

Safe Arrivals and Departures: Elementary Students

Document Integration Project Format

Policy Statement

The York Region District School Board recognizes that monitoring student attendance is the joint responsibility of parents/guardians and school staff. Communication between parents/guardians, students and school staff members is essential to ensuring student safety. Each school will establish a safe arrivals program and a safe departures protocol to promote and support student safety.

Legislative Context

Education Act

Responsibility

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- reviewing the *Safe Arrivals and Departures* policy in accordance with the priorities in the Trustees' Multi-Year Plan and the approved policy review cycle; and
- understanding and communicating with members of the community about the *Safe Arrivals and Departures – Elementary Students* policy, as required.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- implementing and operationalizing the *Safe Arrivals and Departures - Elementary Students* policy.

Superintendents of Schools are responsible for:

- ensuring schools develop and implement a safe arrivals program and safe departures protocol and that they are communicated to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year.

Public Affairs and Communication Services is responsible for:

- ensuring information about the *Safe Arrivals and Departures – Elementary Students* policy is included in appropriate communications shared with all students and parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year.

Principals are responsible for:

- developing, implementing and monitoring a safe arrivals program and a safe departures protocol, in consultation with staff and the school council;
- ensuring that the school's safe arrivals program and safe departures protocol are delivered in a way that complements other school and community safety programs and initiatives; and
- ensuring school staff members, parent/guardians, students and any other members of the school community, as appropriate, are aware of their responsibilities under the safe arrivals program and the safe departures protocol.

School staff members are responsible for:

- ensuring that attendance is taken and any unexplained student absence is addressed immediately.

Students are responsible for:

- ensuring their parents/guardians are aware of their attendance at an afterschool program or event, or if there are any changes in their departure plan, where appropriate.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- ensuring the school has complete and current emergency contact information;
- communicating with the school about any absences, lateness or change in safe departure plans for their child as soon as possible; and
- making decisions about sending their child to school, using their best judgement, when buses are cancelled.

Definitions

Safe Arrivals Program

A safe arrivals program is a series of steps which are performed together with daily school attendance taking to ensure student safety. A safe arrivals program is a mechanism that parents/guardians and schools can use to account for any student's unexplained absence.

Safe Departures Protocol

A safe departures protocol is a series of steps that parents/guardians and schools can use to account for;

- the safe departure of students at the end of the school day or following after-school programs and events, and
- any unexplained student absence from a school-sanctioned after-school activity or event.

Department

Education and Community Services

Policy History

Approved 1996

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Board Procedure #665.0

Safe Arrivals and Safe Departures: Elementary Students

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This procedure outlines the process for developing, maintaining and monitoring a safe arrivals program and a safe departures protocol that enhances the safety of all elementary school students.

Responsibilities

The Director of Education shall:

- implement and operationalize the *Safe Arrivals and Departures* policy.

Public Affairs and Communication Services shall:

- provide support, as required, to schools in communicating information about the safe arrivals program and safe departures protocol to their local communities.

Principals shall:

- inform parents/guardians of their responsibility to;
 - report all absences, late arrivals and/or changes to departure plans to the school in a timely manner,
 - provide the school with complete and current emergency contact information,
 - understand that schools may remain open on days when school buses are cancelled,
 - make decisions, using their best judgment, about whether to send their child to school when buses are cancelled and schools remain open, and
 - understand that on days when buses are cancelled, the school will not follow up on student absences if students are regularly bused but will for students who regularly walk to school;
- reconcile planned student absences or lateness with information obtained through classroom attendance to identify any unexplained absences that will require prompt follow-up;
- contact parents/guardians as soon as possible when their child is identified as absent without explanation;
- establish a process for maintaining a log of actions taken by school staff in accordance with the provisions of the safe arrival program, established Board policies and procedures and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act;
- if all contact and emergency number have been tried and a student is still deemed to be absent without explanation, contact York Regional Police immediately;
- contact parents/guardians as soon as possible if a child has missed a bus after school, has not been picked up as planned following an after school activity or event, or if the child has an unexplained absence at a planned after school activity or event;
- ensure arrangements are made for students who are returned to the school by a bus driver to be picked up by a parent/guardian or designate;
- ensure that staff members filling in for absent staff members are familiar with their responsibilities with respect to the school's safe arrivals program and safe departures protocol; and
- review the safe arrivals program and the safe departures protocol annually with all staff and the school council.

School staff members shall:

- take attendance and report all absences to the office as per school's attendance procedures;
- notify the office when a parent has informed them of a planned lateness or absence of a student in their classroom;
- inform occasional teacher about their responsibilities with respect to the school's safe arrivals program, safe departures protocol and communication about after-school programs or events;
- be aware of alternate pick-up arrangements as communicated by parents/guardians; and
- if supervising an after-school program or event;
 - inform parents/guardians of the schedule for after-school programs or events,
 - at the beginning of each after-school program or event, reconcile any unexplained absences that will require prompt follow-up,
 - communicate immediately to the principal/designate if a student is absent without explanation from an after-school program or event,
 - ensure students are safely released to a parent/guardian or designate at the conclusion of after-school programs or events,
 - be aware of departure plans and,
 - remain with students who are being picked up until parents/guardians or designates arrive, and
 - release students who are permitted to walk home, as outlined in the school's safe departures protocol, following after-school programs or events;
 - communicate the names of any unreleased students to school office staff immediately.

Students shall:

- inform their parents/guardians of attendance at any after-school program or event; and
- inform their parents/guardians of any change to their regular departure plan.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall:

- provide the school with complete and current emergency contact information during the first week of September and throughout the school year if information changes; and
- inform the school of all absences, late arrivals and/or changes to departure plans of their child as soon as possible.

School Bus Drivers shall:

- when no parent/guardian or designate is present at the drop-off location;
 - contact Student Transportation Services, and
 - return the child to the school.

Procedure History

Approved 2007
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