



ADMINISTRATOR HANDBOOK

FLOOD GUIDELINES

Spring, 2010

INTRODUCTION

Given the widespread geography of The Red River Valley School Division, each school and each employee will be affected differently in the event of flooding. While some schools may encounter issues virtually every year, others may not experience anything except in the event of a widespread flood of The Red River.

In response to that quest for information this handbook has been developed to address some of the more common questions/issues that have arisen during past floods/flooding.

Due to the amount of “unknowns” involved with floods and flooding, there may be issues that you have to face that aren’t dealt with by this handbook. Please contact the Administration Office with any questions you have or clarifications you require.

To all employees who are affected by flooding, we understand and appreciate your concern for your homes and families. It is our hope that this information will assist you in making your own plans to face those concerns.

(Note: Any reference to “parent” or “parents” in this document should be taken to include “or legal guardian(s)”.)

Academics

RRVSD'S RESPONSIBILITY TO STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

1. The interest of RRVSD students is paramount in the determination of academic concerns in the event of a flood.
2. During a flood, every effort will be made to continue to offer school services as normally as possible.
3. Where possible, continuation of course work and assignments may be facilitated through independent course work and the use of technology.
4. Decisions on day-to-day instructional matters will be the responsibility of the school principal.
5. If deemed necessary, a decision to extend the term or alter the academic schedule may be made by the Board of Trustees and Superintendents, and as approved by the Minister of Education.
6. Decisions will be made at the school level regarding students who have missed or not completed work due to evacuation, unavailability of transportation, class cancellations or other reasons connected to flooding.
7. The deadline date for exemptions from Provincial exams is generally before any school or the school division would be affected by a spring flood. The school principal may make requests for exemptions from Provincial exams to the Coordinator of the Assessment Unit after the deadline date – if such requests are being made due to students being adversely affected by flooding. See Section 3.4 of the Policies and Procedures for Standards Tests document on the Manitoba Education website for more information.

RRVSD'S RESPONSIBILITY TO STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In accordance with Manitoba's Philosophy of Inclusion and the requirements of appropriate educational programming, RRVSD will consider all students with special needs in the event of a flood.

Where students require additional supports such as an instructional or educational assistant to participate in a meaningful and safe way in their educational program, the services may be interrupted if key staff members are absent due to reasons connected with a flood. Every effort will be made to meet with parents of students with exceptional needs and to develop plans for the event of school closure (which may or may not be connected to the evacuation of specific areas) or shortage of staff. Consideration will be made for the student's educational programming, the availability of alternate staff support and transportation. Whenever possible, the planning will take place early, allowing parents to be involved and aware of potential issues that may interrupt their child's educational programming.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITY TO RRVSD

1. If Students are unable to report to class due to evacuation, unavailability of transportation, or other reasons connected to flooding, their parents will be asked to contact the school and inform the office of the reason for their absence.

Communications

COMMUNICATION MECHANISMS MAY INCLUDE:

- RRVSD website information updated on a regular and timely basis;
- Written communications such as memos, posters, etc.;
- Email – distribution to various lists;
- Telephone – an emergency information line may be established;
- Radio and television for public service announcements; and
- School signs and reader boards.

SHARING INFORMATION WITH PARENTS/STUDENTS DURING A FLOOD

Using information provided by the official spokesperson, RRVSD schools will:

- Keep parents and students apprised of changes to school services. This messaging will provide concise and factual information* regarding:
 - The impact of the flood and flood forecast on the school/school division;
 - What students/parents can expect from their school/school division;
 - What they can do to work with their school/school division; and
 - When suspended services or reduced services will be restored.

* Communication mechanisms cited above will be used for this purpose.

Human Resources

RRVSD RESPONSIBILITIES TO EMPLOYEES

1. Initially, if the entire school division or an individual school is shut down, regular employees who would be scheduled to work will continue to be paid. This decision will be reviewed as the duration of the shutdown is being assessed.
2. Teachers who are unable to attend work due to evacuation, unavailability of transportation, or other reasons connected to flooding will be covered by the existing provisions in the collective agreement. Hourly employees will be expected to use vacation time, banked time and/or personal leave without pay to cover their absence.
3. Where appropriate, and with authorization from the Superintendent & CEO, employees may be requested by their immediate supervisor (Principal, department manager, etc.) to work from home.
4. Maintenance of payroll, pension and benefits will be given priority. In instances where inaccurate disbursements may be made, the division will take corrective steps following the return to "business as usual".
5. In the event of a divisional or school closure, employee income and benefit information will be communicated to the affected employees.

EMPLOYEES RESPONSIBILITIES TO RRVSD

1. Employees will be expected to contact their supervisor if they are unable to attend to work due to evacuation, unavailability of transportation, or other reasons connected to flooding.
2. If a school or work site shutdown has been announced while the employees are at work, employees will be expected to:
 - a. Report to their supervisor prior to leaving the school or work site; and
 - b. Keep in contact with their supervisor by phone or email to establish when they are to return.

3. Once a re-opening of the school or work site has been announced, employees will be expected to:
 - a. Report to work on the identified day, unless they have been advised otherwise by their supervisor; and
 - b. If they are unable to report, they are to contact their supervisor to indicate the reason (due to evacuation, unavailability of transportation, or other reasons connected to flooding).

RRVSD RESPONSE PLAN FOR EMPLOYEE ABSENTEEISM

RRVSD may consider these measures in response to high rates of employee absenteeism:

- Designate backups for key decision makers and arrange for delegation of decision making and financial authority if they are unavailable;
- Discuss possible response measures with the staff currently filling key roles; and
- Document all employees' teaching, administrative or other skills and knowledge in order to determine how they can be used to backfill employees providing key services.

RRVSD RESPONSE PLAN FOR TEACHING ACTIVITIES

RRVSD may consider these strategies for addressing periods of high teacher absenteeism:

Replacement Personnel

- Draw from the substitute pool.
- Use administrative personnel, retired teachers, parents, volunteers or education students (university) to assist teachers.

Alternative Services Delivery

- Combine similar grades, since student absenteeism will reduce class sizes.
- Provide alternate activities that can be accomplished by fewer teaching staff.
- Continue instruction for students who are home due to evacuation, unavailability of transportation, or other reasons connected to flooding, including homework and/or virtual instruction (internet/telephone).
- Consider altering the academic schedule when conditions improve to make-up for lost instruction time.

Scale Back Services

- Postpone or cancel classes or events when necessary.

Maintenance

In the event of a flood, the Maintenance Department of the Red River Valley School Division will fulfill the following requirements:

BEFORE A FLOOD (flooding is forecasted as likely for the area)

- Identify essential services to be continued in the event of a closure (heat, security, etc.).
- Cross-train maintenance staff with regard to any specialized or technical activities, including cross-training staff that normally perform other functions and/or work in other buildings.
- Prepare written instructions so that untrained employees or volunteers can complete some essential tasks.
- Document the location of critical equipment, building systems (service panels), and means of accessing them (e.g. passwords, keys).

DURING A FLOOD

- Services will be maintained as long as possible provided there are adequate supplies and staffing levels.

PERMIT HOLDERS

- All weekend and evening activities held in RRVSD schools may be postponed or cancelled for the duration of the flood.
- Depending on the severity of the flood, RRVSD will determine whether daytime permit holders, such as childcare facilities or nursery schools, should be permitted to continue to operate.
- RRVSD will advise permit holders of school closure plans and clarify their responsibility for alternative relocation.

Transportation

In the event of a flood, the RRVSD's Transportation Department will make every effort to continue to provide busing service to students.

Staffing guidelines outlined in the Human Resources section of this document will apply to employees in the Transportation Department.

Buses will be rerouted or cancelled as roads are closed due to flooding. Should a road remain open, but require buses to drive through flood waters, the Transportation Supervisor will make recommendations to the Superintendent & CEO regarding the cancellation of that route.

If a driver's residence is in a location that is experiencing flooding, buses must be relocated to higher ground. Buses can be parked at a school or at either bus garage. If a driver cannot reach their bus due to evacuation or other reasons connected with flooding, and therefore cannot complete their route, they must attempt to arrange for a spare. The Administration Office should be contacted and advised that a spare is driving the route due to a flood-related issue.

As the driver is expected to complete their route as long as it remains running, the driver will not be paid should he or she be unable to drive their route due to evacuation or other reasons connected with flooding. In addition, if the bus needs to be relocated to higher ground in order to drive the route, there will be no reimbursement for personal driving time and/or mileage.

See also Policy F.13 – ROUTE CANCELLATION.