

Cancellation, Delayed Start, or Early Dismissal of Classes 2021-2022

Overview

The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) establish guidelines for the decision-making process that may lead to cancellation of classes, a delayed start to classes, or early dismissal; and
- (b) establish protocols for communicating a decision once made.

Cancellation, Delayed Start, Early Dismissal, etc.

Cancelling Classes.

Landmark East School will cancel classes should the conditions (such as weather, road, power outage, emergency situation, etc.) make it extremely difficult or dangerous for faculty, staff or students to be on campus, remain on campus, or travel to the school.

Delayed Start.

Some mornings may call for a delayed start, which means that classes would begin at 10:00am. Students could be dropped off at Landmark East School by 9:45am. Reasons for a delayed start include:

- sufficient time for road conditions to improve,
- clearing of parking lots
- more time to reach the campus
- the weather situation changes favourably

Early Dismissal.

If weather conditions become dangerous/of concern during the day, students will be dismissed early and will need to be picked up from school. Parents/Guardians will be notified by email as soon as possible.

School Vans Cancelled.

There are also times when the school vans are not able to make the morning pickup due to bad road conditions, but classes remain in session. In these cases, day students will need to find an alternative way to school. Parents/Guardians will be notified by email as soon as possible.

Making Decisions.

Landmark East is an Independent School – decisions to cancel classes, delay start time, or dismiss students early, are separate from the decisions of AVRCE (Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education) or any other school or business in the area. That is to say, there will be times when AVRCE has cancelled classes but Landmark East School is open.

It is also important to note, that parents/guardians are the final decision makers when it comes to sending (or not sending) their children to school when classes have not been cancelled.

Timing of Notification

Every effort will be made to communicate a firm decision as early as possible, taking into consideration that some students and staff travel from a variety of distances from the school.

Our goal is to communicate a decision whether to cancel classes/delayed start of classes by 6:40 am.

Communications

Landmark East School will notify you as soon as possible should a weather-related event or emergency situation disrupt regular campus operations. Notifications / communications will be made using the following methods:

1) **Email notification.** An email will be sent to all students, parents and staff indicating:

- buses have been cancelled but classes are still running,
- classes have been cancelled, or
- that there is a delayed start to classes (buses not running).

2) **Website Pop-Up.** A pop-up notification will be issued and appear on the home page of the website indicating a cancellation of classes or a delayed start.

3) **Radio Public Service Announcements.** CBC (1-877-236-9350) and AVR website.

For those times when AVRCE has cancelled school but Landmark East School remains open, an email notification will be sent indicating that classes are running as usual.

Sources of Information Used When Making a Decision

Every effort will be made to conduct a thorough search of the data before a cancellation of classes (or a delayed start) decision is made. At times, the situation may require a speedy decision to be made which will be based on the current available information in that moment (data that is subject to change and/or may be different in your area).

When making a decision, Landmark East School will rely on the advice and warnings of:

- RCMP
- Public Transit
- Nova Scotia Road Conditions/511
- Environment Canada
- Nova Scotia Power

Environment Canada Weather Warnings / Types of Alerts (<https://www.canada.ca/>)

The type of alert used depends on the severity and timing of the event:

- **Special Weather Statements** are the least urgent type of alert and are issued to let people know that conditions are unusual and could cause concern.
- **Advisories** are issued for specific weather events (like blowing snow, fog, freezing drizzle and frost) that are less severe, but could still significantly impact Canadians.
- **Watches** alert you about weather conditions that are favourable for a storm or severe weather, which could cause safety concerns.
- As certainty increases about the path and strength of a storm system, a watch may be upgraded to a **Warning**, which is an urgent message that severe weather is either occurring or will occur. Warnings are usually issued six to 24 hours in advance, although some severe weather (such as thunderstorms and tornadoes) can occur rapidly, with less than a half hour's notice.

Environment Canada weather warnings that will lead to a discussion regarding the possible cancellation of classes are as follows:

- Winter Storm Watch
- Blizzard Warning
- Blowing Snow Warning
- Snowfall Warning
- Heavy Snowfall Warning
- Winter Storm Warning
- Hurricane Warning
- Tropical Storm Warning
- Freezing Rain Warning
- Freezing Drizzle Warning
- Tornado Warning

Determining Factors

The safety of our students, staff and faculty is of paramount importance and so when making a decision to cancel classes the following factors will be considered:

- State of emergency or impending state of emergency;
- Weather conditions (current and forecasted);
- Road conditions;
- Availability of public transport;
- Ability to access and use the campus safely;
- Ability to maintain campus roadways, parking lots, paths, stairs and building entrances in safe condition;
- Ability of emergency services to access the campus;

- Disadvantages of sending individuals back into the weather once they have arrived on campus; and
- Anticipation that conditions will worsen or persist such that public transportation may not operate or roads may be closed as a result of storm conditions, which will make travel home unusually difficult or hazardous.
- Forecasted changes in precipitation, wind, or road conditions.

(updated version November 21, 2021)