



Policy: Safe Arrival and Safe Dismissal of Students

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In order to promote the safety of elementary students within its jurisdiction, the Superior North Catholic District School Board has in place a Safe Arrival Program (as per Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum 123, dated February 2, 1999).

This policy is intended to ensure that:

- All elementary schools have procedures in place that are conducted in conjunction with daily school attendance taking procedures and that aim to account for any student's unexplained failure to arrive at school through reasonable efforts to make timely contact with parents, guardians or caregivers.
- Safe arrival programs are developed and implemented by schools with advice from school councils, parents, volunteers and other community members.
- The design of specific procedures reflects local needs and the particular circumstances of the school and the community.
- Schools, parents, Catholic school councils and community work cooperatively for the successful development and implementation of safe arrival programs.
- Safe arrival programs are designed to be flexible, with a view to achieving overall effectiveness and efficiency.

- Procedures to investigate into a situation where a child is deemed missing, are established.

Safe Arrival Program

A safe arrival program shall reflect the following characteristics with respect to program delivery and information and communications.

The program is to be delivered in a manner that complements other schools and community safety programs and initiatives.

The roles and responsibilities of parents, students, the school, Catholic school council and volunteers, are to be clearly identified and documented and broadly communicated to all those who have an interest in safe arrival programs.

The roles and responsibilities of parents and guardians, at a minimum, are to be defined as involving the following:

Parents and guardians are responsible for their children's safety. Safe arrival programs are a mechanism that parents and schools are to use to account for any student's unexplained failure to arrive at school.

Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for communicating planned student absences or lateness to the school, on a timely basis. Their reports are to be reconciled with information obtained through classroom attendance taking procedures, to identify any unexplained absences that require prompt follow-up contacts.

Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for providing the school with complete and current emergency information to enable the school to make any necessary follow-up contacts.

A Safe Arrival Program Shall

- Take into account both normal, recurring circumstances and unusual events and conditions. For example, regular procedures could be modified on days when students are likely to arrive late because of inclement weather or bus cancellations.
- Take into account that a language other than the language of instruction may be used in the absent student's home.
- Specify the steps that are to be taken when a follow-up contact cannot reasonably be made.

- Be reviewed periodically to confirm its effectiveness.
- Ensure that individuals involved in delivering the safe arrival program, receive appropriate training and supervision.
- Encourage parents and volunteers to contribute to the delivery of the various components of the safe arrival program.
- Ensure confidentiality, especially as such pertains to involvement of volunteers.
- Ensure that a process for students deemed missing, is established.

Information & Communications

Information about the scope and features of the school's safe arrival program, and about the roles and responsibilities of all interested parties, are to be communicated clearly and effectively by the Principal/Vice-Principal to school staff, parents, guardians, caregivers, students, school council, volunteers and others in the community who have an interest in the matter.

A reliable method is to be developed for parents, guardians and caregivers, to communicate planned student absences or lateness to the school on a timely basis, particularly outside school hours. For example, a voice messaging system and, if appropriate, a telephone device for the deaf (TTY/TDD) may have to be installed.

Documentation of key student information is to be developed and maintained. Subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, key information could include:

- A log of calls from parents or others who report absences or lateness.
- Names and current telephone numbers, in order of priority, of parents, guardians, caregivers or other individuals to be notified in case of an unexplained student absence.
- Parental consent for school staff and/or volunteers to make these contacts, in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- A log of actions taken by school staff, in accordance with the provisions of the safe arrival program.

Approval and Review Dates

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Reviewed by: Policy Committee, Administrative Council