



Policy: Safe Arrival and Safe Dismissal of Students

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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 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).
- 1.2 This policy is intended to ensure that:
 - 1.2.1 All elementary schools have procedures in place that are conducted in conjunction with daily school attendance 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 and/or guardians.
 - 1.2.2 Safe arrival programs are developed and implemented by schools with advice from Catholic school councils, parents and/or guardians,

volunteers and other community members.

- 1.2.3 The design of specific procedures reflects local needs and the particular circumstances of the school and the community.
- 1.2.4 Schools, parents and/or guardians, Catholic school councils and the community work cooperatively for the successful development and implementation of safe arrival programs.
- 1.2.5 Safe arrival programs are designed to be flexible, with a view to achieving overall effectiveness and efficiency.
- 1.2.6 Procedures to investigate into a situation where a child is deemed missing, are established.

2.0 Safe Arrival Program

- 2.1 A safe arrival program shall reflect the following characteristics with respect to program delivery and information and communications:
 - 2.1.1 The program is to be delivered in a manner that complements other schools and community safety programs and initiatives.
 - 2.1.2 The roles and responsibilities of parents and/or guardians, 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.
- 2.2 The roles and responsibilities of parents and guardians, at a minimum, are to be defined as involving the following:
 - 2.2.1 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.
 - 2.2.2 Parents and/or guardians 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 procedures, to identify any unexplained absences that require prompt follow-up contacts.
 - 2.2.3 Parents and/or guardians are responsible for providing the school with

complete and current emergency information to enable the school to make any necessary follow-up contacts.

3.0 A Safe Arrival Program Shall

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 Take into account that a language other than the language of instruction may be used in the absent student's home.
- 3.3 Specify the steps that are to be taken when a follow-up contact cannot reasonably be made.
- 3.4 Be reviewed periodically to confirm its effectiveness.
- 3.5 Ensure that individuals involved in delivering the safe arrival program, receive appropriate training and supervision.
- 3.6 Encourage parents and/or guardians and volunteers to contribute to the delivery of the various components of the safe arrival program.
- 3.7 Ensure confidentiality, especially as such pertains to the involvement of volunteers.
- 3.8 Ensure that a process for students deemed missing is established.

4.0 Information & Communications

- 4.1 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 to school staff, parents and/or guardians, students, Catholic school council, volunteers and others in the community who have an interest in the matter.
- 4.2 A reliable method is to be developed for parents and/or guardians, 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.

- 4.3 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:
- 4.3.1 A log of calls from parents and/or guardians or others who report absences or lateness.
 - 4.3.2 Names and current telephone numbers, in order of priority, of parents and/or guardians or other individuals to be notified in case of an unexplained student absence.
 - 4.3.3 Parental consent for school staff to make these contacts, in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
 - 4.3.4 A log of actions taken by school staff, in accordance with the provisions of the safe arrival program.

References

- The Education Act
- PPM 123 <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/123.html>, 1999
- The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFFIPA)

Approval and Review Dates

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