



**NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUSINESS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING
INFORMATION SHEET**

DATE: November 13, 2024
TO: Business Committee
FROM: Piet Langstraat, Interim Superintendent
SUBJECT: Inclement Weather

Background

Yearly beginning late September and ending late March, facilities staff plan for the possibility of snow events.

- Approximately 15 pieces of equipment, \$15,000 of road salt and \$27,000 of sidewalk de-icer are prepared and purchased for what is, on average, 10 event days per year
 - Funding for these supplies are diverted from maintenance supplies – meaning that if not required funding can go to other maintenance requirements.
- Labour for an individual snow event can approach \$12,000 in maintenance, not including the cost of caretakers.
 - We have approximately 32 Caretakers who would be deployed on a snow day.
 - Labour is diverted from Maintenance and Operations department duties to snow removal support ie Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical, Grounds, Custodial, etc.
- The CUPE collective agreement allows for up to two snow days per employee. Employees working receive a day off in lieu for the snow day worked.

Discussion

On mornings where there is a possibility of inclement weather, the Transportation Manager, as early as 2:00 am, will begin the process to gather information in the determination of hazardous road conditions for school buses. This information will also be used for the Superintendent or Superintendent Designate to determine if schools shall remain open or be closed due to snow or other hazardous road conditions.

The Superintendent may also consult Facilities (and other stakeholders) with respect to conditions/status of school sites – condition of city streets, parking areas, entry/egress routes, weather warnings and forecasts, other school districts, walking conditions to school sites.

Normally, the decision is made before 6:00 am, but it must be made before 6:30 am. (6:15 am for Gabriola). There are four possibilities:

- a. Close schools
- b. Cancel bus runs but leave schools open
- c. Cancel special needs buses but other buses run and schools are open
- d. Schools are open and buses are running

Once the decision is made, the Executive Director of Communications contacts the Principals/Vice-Principals, local radio station, sends a message to all families/caregivers through School Messenger and posts an alert on the school district website.

All maintenance and custodial staff, with some exceptions, are typically deemed essential service for the purpose of snow clearing and re tasked to remove snow as a priority to support school operations.

Priority of snow removal is as follows:

1. Plowing, salting/sanding of bus drop off, staff/student parking
2. Removal of snow from interior sidewalks, ramps, main entrances and exits
3. City sidewalks in accordance with City Bylaw 5000, section 22 (1)

Plowing and/or salting crews are typically called out at 12:00 am (which typically will give enough time to address parking) with day-shift equipment operators and shoveling crews start at 6:00 am and continue with efforts to ensure sites and sidewalks are cleared. Extended events can challenge crews and equipment to keep up.

Staff continually review response to snow events to ensure operational response is as affective as possible.

