



1. Rationale

The Simcoe County District School Board believes that everyone has the right to work and learn in a safe, supportive environment. Fundamental to this belief is the expectation that the system will have consistent attendance monitoring procedures to ensure student and staff safety. To monitor the presence/absence of its students, each school already has in place procedures for the taking of student attendance on a daily basis. Occasionally an elementary student fails to arrive at school as expected. Safe-arrival programs are used to confirm the safety of a student in the case of such an unexplained absence.

A safe-arrival program is a system of procedures which are performed in conjunction with daily school attendance taking. Parents and guardians are responsible for their children's safety. Safe-arrival programs enhance a safe and supportive learning environment by ensuring that there is a reasonable effort to make timely contact with parents, guardians or caregivers to confirm elementary student safety.

2. Policy

It is the policy of the Simcoe County District School Board that each elementary school in its jurisdiction develop and implement a safe-arrival program. Each school's safe-arrival program is to reflect the local needs and particular circumstances of the school and its community. Such programs are to be developed and implemented by schools in consultation with school councils, parents/guardians, volunteers, and other community members.

3. Guidelines

In designing its safe-arrival program a school community should take into account the unique circumstances of the school such as the number of staff available, the size of the student body, the geographic conditions in the vicinity of the school, the kind of transportation used by students to travel to school, twinned or annexed facilities, and the number of parents/guardians who commute to work out of the area.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/guardians, students, the school staff, school councils, and volunteers play distinct roles in the implementation of a safe-arrival program. The overall effectiveness and efficiency of the program depend on the way in which each group works co-operatively to fulfill its responsibilities.

4.1 **Parents/guardians** are responsible for:

4.1.1 their children's safety until they arrive at school/are picked up by the school bus and once they have left school/are dropped off from the school bus.

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- 4.1.2 reinforcing with their child(ren) that it is a family responsibility (not the school's responsibility) for the child(ren) to report on time to school or to the school bus stop;
 - 4.1.3 submitting written notification of participation/non-participation in the school's safe-arrival program;
 - 4.1.4 reading and responding promptly to communications from the school about the program;
 - 4.1.5 communicating all planned student absences or lateness to the school on a timely basis prior to the start of the school day;
 - 4.1.6 providing the school with complete emergency contact information;
 - 4.1.7 advising an individual that he/she is being designated as an emergency contact;
 - 4.1.8 updating information to ensure that it remains current;
 - 4.1.9 receiving telephone calls to confirm student safety in a courteous and respectful manner.
- 4.2 **Students** are responsible for:
- 4.2.1 attending school and arriving in good time for morning and afternoon classes;
 - 4.2.2 following school procedures with respect to attendance and in particular reporting promptly to the designated location on arriving late at school;
 - 4.2.3 delivering promptly all written communication between school and home/home and school;
 - 4.2.4 being courteous and respectful to school staff and volunteers.
- 4.3 The **school staff** is responsible for:
- 4.3.1 developing and implementing a safe-arrival program with advice from school councils, parents/guardians, volunteers and community members;
 - 4.3.2 conducting the safe-arrival program in conjunction with procedures for the accurate daily attendance-taking of all students;

- 4.3.3 communicating clearly and effectively the scope and features of the safe-arrival program to all who have an interest in the matter;
 - 4.3.4 designating a volunteer co-ordinator and ensuring that all volunteers complete the Volunteer Information Form in accordance with Board administrative procedures;
 - 4.3.5 ensuring that training is arranged for school staff, and parent and community volunteers involved in delivering the program;
 - 4.3.6 providing an appropriate working area and the necessary equipment when volunteers are delivering the program;
 - 4.3.7 ensuring that forms developed for the program are user-friendly and include, when required, a return deadline;
 - 4.3.8 assuming responsibility for the steps to be taken, including immediate involvement of the police, when a child's safety cannot reasonably be confirmed through the safe-arrival emergency contacts;
 - 4.3.9 protecting the privacy of confidential information;
 - 4.3.10 supporting the efforts of volunteers when they are involved in delivering the program, and in particular taking appropriate action when a volunteer reports an abusive telephone conversation;
 - 4.3.11 reviewing the program annually, in consultation with the school council, to confirm its effectiveness.
 - 4.3.12 dealing with students, parents/guardians and volunteers in a courteous and respectful manner.
- 4.4 The **school council** is responsible for:
- 4.4.1 acting as a link between the school and its community in the development and implementation of the program;
 - 4.4.2 publicizing and promoting safe-arrival as a school community program designed to assist parents/guardians with their responsibility for their own children's safety;
 - 4.4.3 recruiting parents/guardians and others when volunteers are required to help deliver the program;
 - 4.4.4 assisting the school with the provision of training for parent and other volunteers;

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4.4.5 assisting in the annual review the program ;

4.4.6 supporting the school in its efforts to implement a safe-arrival program.

4.5 **Volunteers** are responsible for:

4.5.1 making a commitment to the program for a specific length of time and then fulfilling the commitment as agreed;

4.5.2 working co-operatively with school staff and other volunteers in implementing the program, including the selection of a program co-ordinator;

4.5.3 informing the program co-ordinator as soon as possible if unable to fulfill the commitment, or to find a trained replacement, on a given day;

4.5.4 taking part in the training provided as part of the school's safe-arrival program;

4.5.5 maintaining confidentiality with respect to privileged information;

4.5.6 keeping accurate records as required;

4.5.7 referring immediately to the school administration any problem encountered;

4.5.8 being patient and polite when making telephone calls;

4.5.9 refusing in a polite manner to accept abusive comments in response to a telephone call and reporting such incidents to the school principal;

4.5.10 discussing suggestions or concerns about the safe-arrival program with the program co-ordinator and school principal.

5. **Administrative Procedures**

The Director of Education is authorized to establish administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy.

**ADOPTED MAY 19, 1999
REVISED OCTOBER 22, 2003**