



# Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium

## Bus News

Winter 2018

Welcome to the winter edition of the RCJTC “Bus Stop News”. This newsletter is intended to be a publication that will be distributed to all stakeholders to keep them informed of all ongoing or upcoming operational items.

### Inclement Weather Days



During the winter months, Renfrew County’s winter weather can make getting to and from school challenging leading to delays and cancellations of school transportation services due to snow, freezing rain, floods, emergency road closures, etc. On such days, bus delay and cancellation information will be posted on our website ([www.onthebus.ca](http://www.onthebus.ca)) by 6:00 a.m. Parents/guardians/sitters are reminded of the RCJTC’s procedures (which can also be viewed on our [Inclement Weather](#) page)

- The decision to cancel a bus is made as early as possible so that parents have the information to make alternate arrangements
- When transportation to a school is cancelled, schools remain open to receive students. If you choose to bring your child/children into school, you will be responsible for their transportation to and from school
- Once the decision to cancel has been made, it remains in effect for the entire day (if cancelled in the morning it will also be cancelled in the afternoon). When a decision to cancel is made, it will generally apply to all school transportation routes in the individual area.



### Want to know the current status of bussing?

- Know your child’s school bus route number and the name of the company operating it;
- Check frequently for bus cancellations and/or delays via:
  - [Website \(www.onthebus.ca\)](http://www.onthebus.ca)
  - [Twitter \(@RCJTC\\_Trans\)](#)
  - [Facebook \(RCJTC\)](#)
  - [iTunes](#) with iPhone App (verify with “RCJTC”)
  - [Google Play](#) with Android App (verify with “RCJTC”)
  - [Email](#) to parents who subscribe for notifications (confirmation email sent within 3min)



*...the journey of a thousand miles begins with one step*

## Getting to School in Cold Weather:

Students and parents are reminded that extra caution should be taken during the winter months. Please take a moment and review this important information with your children.



- **Bundle Up.** Make sure your children are dressed appropriately for the colder weather. Unexpected mechanical problems with the bus may occur more frequently at this time of year and busses cool off very quickly so having your children dressed for the cold is advisable. This will also ensure students are ready to fully enjoy outdoor break time!
- **Don't Rush to Catch the Bus.** Make sure that your children are at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival time in the morning. If you meet your children in the afternoon, make sure that you are at the stop 10 minutes before the scheduled bus arrival time. Please know that buses will be at the first stop on time however Mother Nature has control after that.
- **Put Down the Phone.** Not looking where you are walking could have disastrous results. When walking on snow or ice covered surfaces, watch where you are walking, take shorter, more deliberate steps or do the "penguin shuffle" in icy areas.
- **Get a Grip.** Wear footwear appropriate for the winter conditions. Avoid footwear with slick (no-tread) soles when walking on wet surfaces, snow or ice. Following snowfalls municipalities' maintenance teams need time to service all their roadways, sidewalks, and trails, so there will be times when students must walk on potentially slippery or snowy routes.
- **Just a Little Patience.** School bus drivers are well trained in driving in winter weather. However, snow and icy road conditions may result in buses being delayed. Safety is every driver's top priority and extra time may be needed to get to and from each stop.
- **Snow Clearing.** If you notice sidewalks or trails that are consistently not cleared after a snow event, please call your municipality for issues on sidewalks in front of private property and sidewalks or paths. Please call your school principal concerning snow clearing issues on school property.
- **Hold on Until the Last Step.** Always use the handrails when getting on and off the bus.
- **Light Your Path.** Consider a flashlight or flashing keychain/band if your children are wearing all dark clothing on dark mornings.
- **Plan for Emergencies.** Review morning and afternoon procedures with your children so they will know what to do if their bus is late or cancelled. It is important for families to have backup arrangements in place of an emergency.
- **Keep Your Distance.** A build-up of ice and snow can create a safety hazard for children waiting at the bus stop. Ensure that your children understand the importance of standing back from the curb as the bus approaches the bus stop.
- **Go Hands Free.** Have your children place their school books and lunches in their backpack. Your children will find it easier to walk through the ice and snow and to board the bus with their hands free to use the bus handrail.
- **Walking in Winter is Healthy.** Students have been walking to school for decades in winter conditions and while it may take a little longer to walk during winter, the effort is worth the additional benefits! Walking outside in cold air can reduce stress, increase serotonin (the happiness hormone), and even though the action may be slower, walking in snow leads to greater heart conditioning and increased endurance over time.