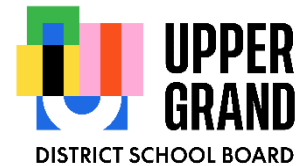


Safe Operation of Schools and Board Sites

Policy 322



Category:	Administration
Administered by:	Director of Education
First adopted:	February 2024
Revision History:	June 2024
Next Review:	2028-29 School Year

1. Policy Statement

The Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) is committed to providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment for staff and students. There are many types of events, however, that may close schools and other board sites to in-person learning, working, and community use. The UGDSB is committed to maintaining the safe operations of all board schools and premises, and to communicating to staff, students, families, and the community when closures are necessary.

This policy does not address when schools or board sites become closed due to site-specific emergency situations that are covered under [Policy 300 Emergency Procedures](#).

2. Definitions

School premises

School premises include the school buildings and all adjacent property which is attached to the school, including playgrounds and parking lots, as well as school buses when being used to transport students to and from school and on school authorized activities.

Authorized visitor

In this policy and procedures, an authorized visitor, as defined in [Ontario Regulation 474/00](#) Access to School Premises, is:

- a person enrolled as a pupil in the school
- a parent or guardian of a pupil in the school

- a person employed or retained by the board who is on the premises for performing the duties assigned by the board
- a person who is otherwise on the premises for a lawful purpose (e.g., delivering mail, voting)
- a person who is invited to attend an event, a class, or meeting on school premises, provided the person is on the premises for a particular purpose
- a person who is invited onto school premises for a particular purpose by the principal, a vice-principal or another person authorized by board policy provided the person is on the premises for that purpose
- a person or persons using the school grounds for recreational purposes during non-school, daylight hours.

Trespassing

A person is trespassing if, without the express permission of the school or board, they:

- a) enter on premises when entry is prohibited under the [Trespass to Property Act](#)
- b) engage in an activity on the premises when the activity is prohibited under the [Trespass to Property Act](#), or
- c) do not leave the premises immediately after they are directed to do so by the school board representative.

3. Access to Schools

Under the *Education Act* and its Regulations¹, the school principal or designate is responsible for the safety of the school environment, which includes a duty to control access to the school premises and school-sponsored activities and events. Students may access the school they attend, and staff may access the school where they work, unless subject to a disciplinary action that prohibits their presence. However, anyone else requires specific permission to be on school property, including:

- students who attend a different school

¹ Education Act, sections 265(1)(m), 302(4), 305; Ontario Regulation 474/00

- visiting staff
 - parents/guardians/caregivers
 - external service providers; and
 - school volunteers, who are screened, approved, and assigned specific tasks by the principal.
- 3.1 All entrances to schools shall be clearly posted with signs requesting that visitors report to the office and sign-in during school hours.
- 3.2 Authorized visitors to schools shall not:
- 3.2.1 be entitled to have access to all areas of the premises
 - 3.2.2 be permitted to be on school premises if there is an existing court order (e.g., custody order) or trespass order in which they are named
 - 3.2.3 be permitted to remain on school premises if their presence is considered detrimental to the safety or well-being of a person on the premises in the judgement of the principal, vice-principal or another person authorized by the board.
- 3.3 When an employee becomes aware that an unauthorized or unwanted visitor is present on board property, they shall inform the principal, supervisor, or designate as soon as possible, and if necessary, seek assistance from the police as outlined in the [Police-School Board Protocol for the Investigation of School-Related Occurrences](#).
- 3.3.1 A principal may issue a Trespass to Property letter under the [Trespass to Property Act](#), advising an individual that they are not permitted to access school property, in consultation with their Superintendent of Education.
- 3.4 If students under suspension or expulsion are found on school property or on the school bus, or attempt to take part in school-related activities, they may be charged under the [Trespass to Property Act](#), or be subject to further disciplinary measures, as outlined in their Letter of Suspension/Expulsion. A record of the specifics of the incident will be kept in the school for a minimum two-year period.

4. Closure of Schools and Board Sites

- 4.1 The Director of Education shall close schools and/or classes to in-person learning and/or board sites to in-person working when the health and safety of students and/or staff may be compromised. Closures may occur in the following situations:
 - 4.1.1 government and/or public health order (e.g. pandemic)
 - 4.1.2 inclement weather or other weather events that compromise safety
 - 4.1.3 loss of running water or heat
 - 4.1.4 insufficient staff to safely operate the school
 - 4.1.5 other emergencies within the local community
- 4.2 The closure of schools and/or board sites to in-person learning and/or working as well as community use shall be communicated to the school community as soon as possible.
- 4.3 There shall be limited or no access to schools and board sites when closed to in-person learning and/or working.
 - 4.3.1 To maintain board services, schools and board sites may be accessed by those employees and other individuals that have been approved by the director or designate.
 - 4.3.2 The board's [Policy 520 Continuity of Learning](#) shall be followed when schools are closed to in-person learning.
- 4.4 All schools shall remain open on inclement weather days when bus service is cancelled by [Service de transport de Wellington-Dufferin Student Transportation Services](#) (STWDSTS), unless otherwise directed by the Director of Education.
- 4.5 The board has the authority to lock facilities at any time at their discretion (e.g., for safety reasons, etc.).

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 The principal shall ensure that the rules regarding school access are communicated to the school community annually.
- 5.2 Staff at all schools shall report to work on bus cancellation days or follow the inclement weather procedures for their employee group if unable to safely report to work.
- 5.3 The Director of Education or designate shall ensure that information about school and/or board office closures is widely communicated as soon as possible. The board's [Policy 216 Communications](#) shall be followed when schools and/or board sites become closed to in-person learning and/or working.
- 5.4 When an employee becomes aware that an unauthorized or unwanted visitor is present on board property, they shall inform the principal, supervisor, or designate as soon as possible, and if necessary, seek assistance from the police as outlined in the [Police-School Board Protocol for the Investigation of School-Related Occurrences](#).

6. References

This policy operates in conjunction with the following:

- [Education Act](#) and its regulations
- [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 474/00 \(Access to Premises\) Trespass to Property Act](#), [Education Act](#) (Section 305)
- [Policy 216 Communications](#)
- [Policy 300 Emergency Procedures](#)
- [Policy 304 Transportation](#)
- [Policy 406 Health and Safety](#)
- [Policy 510 Safe Arrival](#)
- [Policy 520 Continuity of Learning](#)