

RESPONSES TO CORONER'S INQUEST RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION	GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
<p>1. There should be external audits to monitor compliance of schools and school districts in their implementation of Department of Education Policies 512 and 513.</p>	<p>The Department of Education's contract for audits with the comptroller's office will henceforth include periodic unannounced audits. In addition, DoT will report on compliance with maintenance and inspections.</p>
<p>2. Hosting schools should have contingency kits available with basic overnight supplies (air mattresses, bedding) should the weather change and hotels or home billets are not available. Hosting schools should be prepared to house a visiting team in the school if necessary.</p>	<p>We will ask districts to ensure this happens.</p>
<p>3. All traveling school teams and activity groups should carry with them written contingency binders which would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact information for hotels in all communities which they may be traveling; ○ AMEC Earth & Environment weather phone contact information; and ○ A current list of the names of schools' vice-principals, and principals, the district's transportation manager, director of education, director of finance and administration and the superintendent. 	<p>This will be incorporated into Policy 513 which already includes the requirement of a contact person and monitoring of meteorological and road conditions.</p>
<p>4. There should be a concerted effort by high schools around the province and by the New Brunswick Interscholastic Athletic Association (NBIA) to create schedules that minimize travel in winter months.</p>	<p>The NBIAA-ASINB has formed a committee to review the current formats used by high schools and conferences to arrive at league schedules for winter sports sanctioned by the Association. Once this information has been collected and reviewed, the NBIAA-ASINB will be meeting with all conference presidents to determine the most effective means</p>

	<p>for arriving at league schedules that address traveling during the winter months. This committee will also be tasked with reviewing the limit of number of games per season per sport. The safety of students/athletes and their coaches/assistants/managers is of paramount importance to the NBIAA-ASINB and they are proud to work with the Department of Education in response to the recommendations from the Coroner's Inquest.</p>
<p>5. The New Brunswick Department of Education to take full responsibility for the safety of children traveling to off-site extra-curricular events when they are representing their schools.</p>	<p>The Department of Education takes responsibility for the safety of students at all times, and will continue to make safety the priority.</p>
<p>6. Nothing less than a qualified, class 2 yellow school bus driver(s) with endorsements B (valid for school buses) and E (valid for air brakes) for all student travel to off-site extra-curricular events. Teachers, coaches and parents, as well as volunteers, should not be driving children to off-site extra-curricular activities.</p>	<p>The coaches, teachers, principals and DEC members who attended the recent forum, told us that it is neither feasible nor necessary to use a bus driver for all student travel.</p>
<p>7. A weather law preventing students from being transported to off-site extra-curricular events in bad weather. If there is a storm alert, the game is cancelled. If the weather changes at destination, students stay overnight. The weather protocol should be used for co and extra-curricular activities.</p>	<p>Again, Forum participants told us that a weather law was neither feasible nor desirable, and that it must be the school principal (through delegated authority from the Superintendent) who makes decisions respecting travel during inclement weather, as specified in Policy 513.</p>
<p>8. Fifteen passenger and seven passenger vans banned for student travel across Canada. Only yellow school buses and multi function activity vehicles (MFAV's) should be used.</p>	<p>Fifteen passenger vans have been, and will continue to be, banned for passenger use by schools. After full investigation, however, it has been determined that all vehicle types currently permitted under policies 512/513 are widely considered as suitable for the transportation of students and adults. Forum participants also indicated that they were</p>

	comfortable using those vehicles.
9. Minimum standard on tire tread depth has to be raised to a minimum of 4/30 seconds and tread depth should be measured across the full width of the tread. Clients should be advised with written recommendation that their tires are approaching replacement time.	<p>With regard to tire tread, the Registrar of Motor Vehicles will review Canadian and US standards for passenger vehicles. A decision in respect to this standard will be made before labour Day.</p> <p>The Registrar of motor Vehicles will also review the issue of tire wear notification, examine best practices across North America and then make a decision in respect to this matter.</p>
10. Drivers should drive no more than the recommended hours of driving (14 hours on duty time).	<p>Policy 513 includes a requirement to follow rules established under the Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulation (2007-39) established under the Motor Vehicle Act and the Federal Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations (Canada). This requirement will continue to exist.</p> <p>Regulations under the terms of the National Safety Code requires drivers not exceed a maximum of 13 hours/day. The Registrar of motor Vehicles will ensure that a letter is sent to each driver with a New Brunswick commercial driver license (Class 1 to 4). As well as information in respect to the requirements for Hours of Service, information will be included in respect to their requirements for pre-trip inspection, the keeping of a log book and the requirement that a bus be inspected every six months.</p>
11. A process in place so that the persons employed by the Department of Education who fail to fulfill their duties as outlined in the Guidelines, Policies and Regulations of the Department are reprimanded. The reprimand is recognized and serves as a reminder to other staff that they must do their job or they will be confronted with a reprimand or dismissal, if need be.	<p>Appropriate disciplinary action is always taken in instances where Department of Education or School District employees have neglected their responsibilities under the Education Act, its Regulations or Departmental policies. Disciplinary action reflects the seriousness of the violation and is administered in accordance with the applicable collective agreement or personnel policies. This practice will continue to be used.</p>

<p>12. The maintenance of highway edge drops kept seamless at all times; therefore, no edge drop.</p>	<p>Shoulders are subjected to conditions such as continuous wheel loading, plowing of snow during winter maintenance activities and the elements (rain, freeze/thaw cycles) which prevents having a “seamless” edge drop at all times between the road surface and the shoulder.</p> <p>Each year the Department of Transportation’s summer maintenance program provides funding for various maintenance activities, including re-gravelling of shoulders, on approximately 18,000 kilometers of provincially designated highway. The Department will continue to include the requirements for the re-gravelling of shoulders, along with all other maintenance tasks, when prioritizing work within its budget allotments.</p> <p>In addition to the summer maintenance program, re-gravelling or upgrading of existing shoulders is also carried out under the Department Capital Construction Program.</p>
<p>13. All vehicles transporting students must have winter tires.</p>	<p>This is a requirement in Policy 513 and will continue to be mandated. All vehicles which have a winter tire (snowflake insignia on the tire sidewall) available from tire manufacturers will be fitted with winter tires on all wheels from Nov 1 to April 30 annually. Vehicles with a weight classification for which winter tires are not available will be fitted with traction tires on the drive axles and steering tires on the steering axle as per the school bus tire policy.</p>
<p>14. It should not be up to the Student Representative Council (SRC) to pay for the multi functional activity vehicles or the maintenance of these vehicles. It should be paid by the Province. Student Representative Council should not have to pay the bus drivers to drive the multi functional activity vehicles if our recommendation for mandatory bus drivers for these</p>	<p>As its name implies, extra-curricular activities is separate and apart from the fundamental educational program that is provided free of charge to all students. In fact, only a small minority of students participates in these activities. Despite this, funding for extra-curricular activities was increased by almost 75% in 2009-10, in order to help districts and schools offset some of their costs. However, schools, students, parents</p>

vehicles is passed.	and communities will continue to be required to contribute to all programs that fall outside the regular program, including extra-curricular activities. Schools already use numerous fundraising methods, and could consider additional mechanisms, such as appropriate advertising on MFAB's that have been turned over to the provincial fleet.
15. There should be an activity organizing committee in place that parents would be involved with in respect to planning the travel for the activities involved.	This recommendation will be incorporated as a requirement into Policy 513.
16. The Principal and Vice-Principal only should decide if travel will take place during inclement weather. Therefore, there should be a provincial training model to help them make informed decisions about travel.	This is the responsibility of the Superintendent or their delegate, which is usually the principal or vice-principal of the school. Superintendents will be asked to share best practices in terms of making informed decisions about travel in inclement weather. (See also #7).
17. An itinerary or detailed explanation of trip planned should be sent to each student's parents.	Current policy requires that parents be aware of and agree with travel arrangements.
18. Additional assets (i.e. snow plough) and operators be used by Department of Transportation at the time of bad weather all over the Province.	Presently the Department's winter maintenance fleet consists of approximately 500 assets (snow plows and graders) throughout the province. Department staff coordinate the provision of winter maintenance services during winter events such that the required number of assets to meet the Department's winter maintenance level of service, as defined in the Winter Maintenance Service Policy, are employed. During times of bad weather the Department's entire available fleet is employed in the delivery of service, however motorists can expect some inconvenience and will be expected to modify their driving practices to suit road conditions.
19. The Department of Transportation Road Patrol should report the road conditions to the road supervisor	The Department presently carries out winter road patrols on all arterial highways and identified major collector highways as

<p>immediately.</p>	<p>per the Department's Road Patrol guidelines.</p> <p>The road patrol persons are responsible to patrol and inspect road conditions and inform Maintenance Superintendents and/or Highway Supervisors of deteriorating weather and road conditions as soon as conditions warrant. In addition the Department has implemented a Road Weather Information System (RWIS) which includes 40 Environmental Sensor Stations (ESS) installed on the National Highway System in the province. Information provided by RWIS allows for improved decision making for winter storm response by maintenance personnel.</p>
<p>20. Should be mandatory for all policies in place to be read and signed by all parties involved for the safety of all students.</p>	<p>We will be amending Policy 513 as a requirement for implementation at the district / school level as part of the initial team meeting (refer to response under item 17).</p>
<p>21. As part of our outlined recommendations, we would like all current policies already in place to remain as such and to be strictly adhered to.</p>	<p>Current policies will continue to be in place, and will be aligned to reflect new decisions made as a result of the recommendations.</p>
<p>22. That the procedures developed by District 15 in regards to safeguarding pupil transportation be disseminated to all School Districts in the Province of New Brunswick and through them to all schools within the District.</p>	<p>District 15 policies once finalized will be circulated to all other districts to assist them in creating their own policies that are consistent with the provincial policies.</p>
<p>23. That the Department of Transportation review the condition of the road shoulders and make the necessary repairs to the section of Highway 8 from the junction of Route 11 south to the Allardville exit.</p>	<p>The Department has carried out shouldering activities on both sides of the highway, in the vicinity of the accident site, for a distance of 0.600 km. Shouldering activities on an additional 14 kilometers of shoulder has been approved and will be carried out on Route 8 from Bass River towards Route 11 during the 2009 construction season.</p>
<p>24. That the Registrar of Motor Vehicles advise all licensees</p>	<p>The Registrar of Motor Vehicles will advise the owner of any</p>

in the Province of New Brunswick that all 15 passenger vans (regardless of who operates them) are to be inspected on a semi-annual basis.

10 to 24 passenger vehicles that the vehicle must be inspected every six months. This alert will be included in the same message as will be sent to all commercially licensed drivers in addition to all owners of 10 to 24 passenger vehicles. Additionally, this message will be sent to all motor vehicle inspection station owners.