

DATE: February 20, 2018

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Maintenance of Schools During Extreme Weather
(Response to Request for Information #011)

ORIGINATOR: Dr. Lorne Parker, Assistant Superintendent

**RESOURCE
STAFF:** Garry Padlewski, Christopher Wright, Daren Yaremko

REFERENCE:

ISSUE

The following information was requested:

That Administration provide a brief summary of the steps being taken to ensure our schools are protected in future cold spells or extreme weather episodes.

BACKGROUND

The District experienced freeze-up events over the winter break that were caused by a variety of issues. More specifically:

- Challenges with heating in modular units at four of our new schools resulted in flooding due to frozen sprinkler and water lines. Administration has worked closely with the Province and the modular supplier to ensure heating design is remedied.
- A City of Edmonton fire hydrant in the J. Percy Page School parking lot ruptured, flooding the parking lot and the adjacent J. Percy Page gymnasiums.
- Infrastructure Maintenance staff have identified that the sprinkler line and heating duct installed in the ceiling space at amiskwacy Academy requires additional insulation. Edmonton Public Schools currently leases this building from the City of Edmonton.
- Hose bibs – at two schools, hose bibs penetrating an exterior wall froze. The re-insulation of hose bibs at all schools has been added to core services inspections. All hose bibs requiring re-insulation will be completed.
- At Minchau School, an in-ceiling heating unit in a staff bathroom malfunctioned. Cold air entered down through the ventilation shaft which initiated the temperature drop. Frozen pipes resulted overnight on January 1, 2018, and caused flooding in the school.

CURRENT SITUATION

The District's preventative maintenance program and safeguards such as low temperature alarms in school boiler rooms and low pressure alarms on sprinkler line sensors are employed by the District to monitor challenges with extreme weather. In most cases, these safeguards were effective over the winter break in early detection of cold weather challenges.

The District has a manual override for boiler systems to return to daytime operating temperatures in the event of cold weather. Ongoing review of preventative maintenance and technical supports provides for innovation and improvements on a continual basis.

KEY POINTS

While flooding events over the winter break were caused by a variety of issues, District administration continues to ensure every effort is made across all District facilities to ensure that freeze-up events are prevented to every extent possible.

- Additional sensor mechanisms and alarm systems are being explored and considered for feasibility.
- The District's preventative maintenance program has numerous building and mechanical system checks embedded in the annual inspection schedule.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

N/A

CW:kk