

Monday, November 04, 2019

Dear Parents and Students,

Our District understands that our decision to open or close schools offer a two-hour delayed start, or resort to an early release in bad weather has a big effect on families. Also, we understand that our students are better served by being in school – both academically and socially. As always, our top priority is the safety of our students and staff. Information is posted on Facebook, TextCaster, and local news channels. If you did not receive a Textcaster message, please contact the school to find out if you are on the list, or we can check and see if there is a problem with your connection.

The bus will always run. However, it is difficult for us to estimate the time of arrival due to the road conditions. If the bus does not pick up your child, they will not be counted as absent during a late start.

The following information will help you gain a better understanding of school closing procedures.

WHO MAKES THE DECISION?

As Superintendent of Schools, I am responsible for the final determination. When bad weather affects the area, I decide to open/close schools or modify the school day schedule based on a careful analysis of all relevant factors, such as

- Information on road conditions from transportation staff and local law enforcement and road crews; We must give careful consideration to the most dangerous roads in the district; they can be treacherous, even if your street looks clear.
- Amount of accumulated snow and ice;
- Whether precipitation is expected to continue throughout the day;
- Temperature and wind chill (wind chills at or below -15°F during key walking and waiting-for-bus times are given special consideration);
- Impact on our transportation fleet (school bus diesel fuel begins to gel at an ambient temperature of zero degrees);
- Weather predictions (including those from a weather alert service);
- Storm timing;
- Building conditions (such as whether there are electricity and heat);

- Parking lot conditions;
- What other districts are doing.

WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE?

I strive to decide what we are doing in a timely manner, in order that we can notify **TextCaster, FACEBOOK, TV stations Channel 41, Channel 4, Channel 5, Channel 9 and Channel 62** (*please don't forget to check their websites as they do not post it on the newscast if it does not involve a majority of the school districts*).

We also post the information on our phone system 660 255-4415. Keep in mind that unusual weather conditions may force us to decide after this time. Stay tuned to the stations listed below as well as our phone system, for updates on the closings.

WILL WE CLOSE SCHOOL IF CONDITIONS WORSEN?

If conditions worsen during the school day, we may need to have an early dismissal, but we will give as much notice as possible through the previously mentioned means and call each of you personally.

Although I do my absolute best in this process, I know that often no perfect decision exists. If you do not feel that it is safe for your child to get to school, you may use your best judgment as to whether or not he or she should attend.

I hope that this explanation helps everyone understand the process that our district uses to make the best possible decision for all in our district.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Betty Vassmer
Superintendent