

Weather Procedures for D426

The winter season creates the possibility of weather related school closures, late starts, or early dismissals. I want to provide you with insight to the process and how you can stay informed of possible closures. The process includes consultation with transportation, maintenance, local government and school districts.

School Closure: Weather related events might trigger the need to close schools. The decision to close schools is based upon a review of multiple weather forecasts, and other information regarding road conditions. A closure is called as a means to protect all of our students, staff, and parents. The decision to close school is based upon the following factors:

Hazardous Road Conditions – Our local municipalities do an excellent job ensuring our local roads are cleared and salted following a storm. Our local road commissioners are dedicated to providing safe roads. However, they cannot control the duration or intensity for each weather event. Given the open terrain and the lack of snowdrift fencing can often create significant drifting and icing hazards that force us to close schools. If road conditions are deemed hazardous we may opt to close to allow crews to safely clear the roads and prevent any risk to our students and staff.

Extremely Low/Hazardous Temperatures: Forecast -30° or colder creates a significant risk of hypothermia, frostbite, and asthma. The District may opt to close schools if the projected temperatures are forecasted to remain at these low levels throughout the day.

Delayed Start: As an educator I have worked in schools in a number of different roles; I find that delayed starts are usually challenging for families logistically and often are not the most effective days instructionally. However, there could be instances in which a delayed start is needed. If there is a delay, school would start two hours later than the scheduled start of the day.

Early Dismissal: (Used on very rare occasions as the District would likely close schools if there were a severe weather event projected for mid-day or early afternoon). The District makes every effort to track and monitor storms or impending weather. However, forecasts can be wrong and storms can increase in speed, intensity, and duration. In these instances, the District may utilize an early dismissal when incoming weather is expected to create hazardous conditions for students, staff, and parents during regular dismissal times. The decision to implement an early dismissal would follow communication to each student's parent/guardian via SchoolMessenger (phone message and email) and postings to our website and social media channels. The District will also work in collaboration with local media agencies to supply timely communication. This is not a desired option and we know the risks of sending students home during the day without planning.

When will I be notified of a school closure, delayed start or early release?

As a parent, I am aware of the impact that these decisions have on work schedules and a parent's ability to secure supervision for their children. If weather conditions/forecasts are definitive; I will absolutely make the decision the evening before school. If conditions change or weather increases in severity overnight, you will receive an update no later than 5:30 am if we are implementing a closure or delayed start (reminder: please also look to our Facebook page, website, and local media broadcasts for updates).

What if I feel that my child needs to stay at home due to the weather conditions?

As a parent/guardian, you know your child's needs and need to be able to make the appropriate judgement call. If parents choose to keep their child home in extreme weather circumstances, the absence will be counted as excused.