



East Newton R-VI School District

MEMO

FROM: Dr. Ron Mitchell, Superintendent

TO: East Newton School District Community

SUBJECT: Decision-making process: School closing for inclement weather

We will assess a number of factors in an effort to determine when to cancel school for inclement weather. The rank-order of importance is the following:

1. Ability to safely transport students to and from school
2. Wind chill factor
3. Combination of factors
4. Actions taken by surrounding school districts

Transportation Safety

If our roads, in particular bus routes, are believed to be hazardous to travel during pick-up and/or drop-off periods, we will cancel school.

Wind Chill

The National Weather Service indicates frostbite of exposed skin is likely to occur within thirty (30) minutes when wind chills range from minus eighteen (-18) and minus thirty-three (-33) degrees. Students walking to and from school, or waiting for a bus, are most at risk in these conditions. Therefore, if the wind chills are anticipated to be within the above range before and/or after school we will cancel school. Source:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/windchill.shtml>

Combination of factors

In some cases, the wind chill may be low, but not within the dangerous range – however, our roads may have questionable conditions. If these factors combine to create unsafe transportation conditions, we will cancel school on that day.

Surrounding School Districts

When weather conditions are suspect and neighboring school districts cancel their school, our likelihood of closing dramatically increases. Close proximity to neighboring schools and the perception of safety may deter all students from attending school – even if we remain open. Low attendance rates affect funding, instruction, and learning. It is not a wise use of time and resources if this scenario is likely to happen.

Closing Information

When we must cancel school, we will provide local media outlets with our decision at the earliest possible moment. It is wise to check multiple sources and not rely on one single method. Below is a list of media sources in which we will provide information:

1. Automated phone call from the school district
2. Television
3. Radio
4. Electronic – Text messages, e-mail, Twitter

Evening Events

On the first day school is canceled, it is highly likely the evening events will be canceled as well. However, if consecutive days of school are missed due to weather, events may be conducted depending on numerous factors. Local road and weather conditions in our district and the local road and weather conditions of opposing schools will be taken into consideration. Also, a factor to consider would be the timing of regular seasons contest and the start of the district tournament. In some cases events will be schedule on Wednesday nights in order to accommodate conference games and the end of the regular season.

Final Comments

The process of making these decisions is not taken lightly. We will make the most practical and thoughtful decisions with the best and most current information. Ultimately, our decision will most likely never be received with 100% support. A task on which we will NEVER take a chance is the safety of our students. *We will always error on the side of keeping your family members off dangerous roadways.*

If you have any questions about this process, please feel free to contact me at 417-472-6231 or by email at mitchellr@eastnewton.org