

SCHOOL YEAR: 2008-09

School Emergency Closings

School emergency closings could happen at any time of the year. Parents need to arrange plans with their children (a neighbor, childcare, employer, etc.) on what is expected should an emergency closing occur. Decisions to close or dismiss school early are always a judgment call; however, we do use some general criteria in making such decisions. School procedures call for an emergency school closing announcement to be given over local radio and television media. Below are some of the criteria and examples of what would impact a decision to cancel school or to dismiss school early.

Weather forecasts – Weather conditions and events are very unpredictable. We generally do not cancel school or dismiss school early solely on a weather forecast. Weather events must be occurring and deteriorating for school to be cancelled or for us to dismiss early.

Snow – Generally speaking, snow is not a primary reason for closing school. As long as roads are not drifting shut, it's possible we would have school even with a sizable snowfall (e.g., greater than six inches).

Road conditions – As referenced above, road conditions dictate many of our decisions. Due to the fact the district is widely spread out, we have an early morning process (before 5:00 a.m.) of checking our rural roads.

Cold – We will look at wind chill and air temperature (also road conditions) when making a decision relating to cold weather. Please remember that we do live in central Illinois so below 0 degree weather is not uncommon. In most situations, if air temperature is 0 degrees to -10 degrees with a little or moderate wind chill, we will likely have school. Air temperature of -20 degrees or below (regardless of wind chill) will probably cause us to cancel school. If temperatures are between -11 degrees to -19 degrees and depending on wind chill, road conditions, and other current weather conditions, we may or may not have school.

When are decisions made? A decision to cancel school may occur between 6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. the night before school. In most instances, no later than 6:30 a.m. the next day. In an extreme emergency, we may have to announce early dismissal during the school day.

Please remember that the safety of our students will always be our top priority. I trust this communication provides you with helpful information into our decision-making process.

Jeanne Williamson
Superintendent