LAKEWOOD LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Closings & Delays Guidance

This document outlines School Closings & Delays guidance in the event our district experiences severe weather and we decide to delay or close school.

We understand that our decision to open or close schools, have a two-hour delay, or resort to an early release in bad weather impacts families. As always, our top priority is the safety of our students.

While we work to do our best in this process, we know that often no perfect decision exists. If you do not feel that it is safe for your child to get to school, use your best judgment as to whether he or she should attend. If you decide to keep your child at home, please contact your child's school to report their absence.

When Lakewood Local Schools CLOSE due to weather:

- All evening activities in the elementary and middle school buildings are canceled.
- High school evening activities may take place depending on the weather throughout the day. Communication regarding such events will be made by relevant coaches, advisors, and administrators.
- Preschool is canceled.
- Students enrolled in our partner colleges should abide by the college or university's closure policy. Students must provide their own transportation if Lakewood is closed but the college or university remains open.
- Community groups scheduled to use the school facilities will have their events canceled.
- CTEC students are excused from attendance at CTEC.

When Lakewood schools DELAY due to weather:

- AM preschool is canceled.
- The CTEC bus will be delayed and leave Lakewood HS at the delayed time.

1. HOW DO WE MAKE OUR DECISION?

When bad weather affects the area, we make the decision to open/close schools or modify the schedule based on a careful analysis of all relevant factors, such as the following:

- Information on road conditions from transportation staff, local law enforcement and road crews;
- Amount of accumulated snow and ice;
- Precipitation expected throughout the day;
- Weather predictions;
- Storm timing;
- Building conditions (whether there is heat/electricity);
- And parking lot conditions.

Our district covers a significant amount of territory – approximately 100 square miles. Weather and road conditions may be fine in one portion of the district, but not another. In such instances, we must close school or delay the start for the entire school district. Under no circumstances will the District hold classes when Licking County is placed on a Level 2 or Level 3 Snow Emergency.

Please keep in mind that surrounding districts have often aligned with our decision due to similar decision processes, but there will be days when unique factors impact our decision to remain open – or to close.

2. WHO MAKES THE DECISION?

The Superintendent is responsible for the final decision, based on the factors above and in consultation with the Transportation Director.

3. WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE?

We try to make the decision by 6:00 am, or earlier, so that we can make a call to all families, notify radio and TV stations, post the information to our social media channels, and send electronic notices to emergency announcement subscribers. The Superintendent will post on his Instagram (@suplancers) account first if you want the earliest possible notice. Keep in mind that unusual weather conditions may force us to delay first and then make the decision to cancel at a later time.

4. WILL WE CLOSE SCHOOL IF CONDITIONS WORSEN?

Even if weather conditions worsen, we cannot reverse our decision in the morning without endangering students. Once we make the decision to open the schools, many parents rely on it and leave for work. If we send students back home, many will return to unsupervised bus stops and empty houses. Sometimes conditions worsen, only to improve as road crews mobilize, and it is better to keep students, especially the students who drive, in school until regular release time. If conditions worsen during the school day, we may need to have an early dismissal or cancel afternoon pre-school classes. We will give as much notice as possible.

5. WILL WE CLOSE SCHOOL IF IT IS TOO COLD?

There is no specific temperature that triggers a delay or closing. Decisions to delay based on cold take into consideration the temperature and wind (wind chill). We also examine the status of our buses starting and staying warm. We are aware that there is a point when it is too cold for children to be outside, and we will delay or close based on the forecast. In general, when frostbite can occur within 20 minutes, we will delay to allow possibly warmer temperatures to arrive. Should the forecast call for a no change in the wind chill temperatures, we will consider making the decision to cancel classes for the day. For reference, we utilize the National Weather Service’s wind chill chart.

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