

USD 497 INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

When will any school schedule changes be announced?

To allow for parents and families to prepare for school schedule changes, the district will always work to make weather related announcements as soon as possible, no later than 10 p.m. the preceding night, or by 6 a.m.

Please note that no announcement is made if schools are in session as scheduled.

Who makes the decision?

Members of the district team confer with local, city, and county road officials, administrators and members of the student transportation team who drive the roads, when needed, to check actual conditions across the district. These professionals, driven by safety as the top priority, collaborate on school closure decisions, given current weather/travel conditions, forecasts, and the condition of roads, sidewalks, and school parking lots.

As a reminder, conditions may vary widely across areas of the district.

Parents always have the ultimate decision to keep their children home from school during inclement weather conditions. Please notify your child's school of this decision.

How do I find out about schedule changes?

The district sends automated phone/email/text messages to staff and school families. Call 785/832-5000 for a recorded message or visit www.usd497.org or Lawrence Public Schools on Facebook for announcements.

Area media also announce school closings and delays. If there is no announcement, it is likely school is in session as planned.



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How is a Two-Hour Delayed Start Managed?

Safety is the primary focus when a determination is made to close schools or to delay the start of school by two hours. A delayed start may allow hazardous road, sidewalk, and parking conditions to be cleared.

When unsafe travel conditions require a delay of the start of school by two hours, buses will pick up students at their regular bus stop two hours after the regularly scheduled time.

For example, if a child normally catches the bus at 6:45 a.m., the pick-up time on a two-hour delayed schedule is 8:45 a.m. Likewise, schools open two hours after their regularly scheduled start time.

Any before-school activities or zero-hour classes will be canceled.

A cold breakfast will be served two hours later than your school's regularly scheduled serving time. School lunch will be available as usual and school dismissal times remain the same.

While school administrators report to school at the regularly scheduled time, teachers and staff will not be on duty until 15 minutes before school begins. As a result, schools cannot provide supervision for students prior to the start of school. Custodians report to work at the direction of the Facilities and Operations Department. The district's Educational Support Center will open at 9:30 a.m.

Who's on duty when schools are closed?

Only staff members performing weather-related or time-sensitive tasks at the direction of their supervisor are on duty when schools are closed.

Schools cannot provide child care when buildings are closed.

What happens if the weather worsens during the school day?

We will always work to avoid unexpected early dismissals; however, there may be circumstances when early dismissal is unavoidable. Parents should make prior arrangements for supervision of their children.

It is important for schools to be able to reach parents and designated child care providers during daytime hours. Please make sure to give your child's school current phone numbers and emergency contact information.

When it is necessary to dismiss children early during a regular school day, the district will contact parents and area media outlets. If weather conditions worsen and schools remain open, parents may choose to pick up their children early after informing school staff.

What cold weather provisions are made for elementary recess?

Elementary recess is held indoors if the temperature or wind chill fall below 15 degrees.