



Snow Days: How they are decided in Allen Park Public Schools

The decision to close school due to inclement weather is not an easy one. We realize it has a large impact on Allen Park Public Schools students, parents and staff. We want to share with you the process and factors that we consider when determining a weather-related school closing.

We know that students are best served by being in class. But we also know that we can't control the weather which may necessitate the closing of schools. Our first priority is the safety of our students and staff. **It is also important to note that calling a day of school off applies to all students and select staff.** The reason for this is that all teachers regardless of assignment report to work daily. If school is called for inclement weather, no educators will be reporting to work.

Who makes the decision to close school?

The superintendent makes the final decision to close school based on the factors below.

How do we make the decision to close school?

- Information on current road conditions from our transportation and maintenance staff who monitor the roads throughout the night and into the morning
- Current weather conditions and predicted weather conditions
- Amount of snow and ice accumulation
- Duration and timing of the snow or ice
- Temperature and wind chill (We use a [-20 wind chill](#) for a sustained amount of time as a guide) Here is a [chart](#) that explains how the wind-chill factor can cause frostbite when it approaches cold temperatures.
- School building conditions (electricity, heat, water)
- School parking lot and sidewalk conditions
- Operation of buses and ability to travel on snow-covered or icy roads
- Consultation with neighboring school districts and weather officials

When do we make the decision to close school?

When possible, we can determine a school closing the evening prior. But most of the time we have to wait until the early morning hours due to changing weather conditions or to give our maintenance staff time to clear parking lots and sidewalks, and the time our transportation staff need to travel the routes safely.

The notifications go out as soon as a decision is made to give families as much notice as possible.

We will NOT call after 11 pm or before 5 am.

How are parents and staff notified of a school closing?

We use a variety of communications methods to notify the community of a school closing. As soon as the decision has been made to close school we:

- Send an automated call to parents and staff from the superintendent
- Send a text message/email via MiStar Q Communication (Parent Square)
- Post to district Facebook page
- Post on local news stations including Channel 2, 4, 7 and WJR and WWJ radio and other area stations that pick up the information

Why do an early release?

Understandably early release days pose an entire array of concerns, so why would we consider it? Our goal is to actually have school on our scheduled days provided the conditions, based on the information we have at the time, are safe for travel. The State of Michigan allows us to close school six days per year with an option to ask the state to dismiss an additional three. These days are actually calculated via hours, so when we do an early dismissal the hours the students are in school count for us and can prevent us from adding days. But safety is always the main priority so we need to ensure that if we release students early, there will be someone to pick them up, greet them at the bus or home.

Parent Decision

Remember, the District will make the best decision for the majority of our students.

While we do our best to monitor conditions throughout the cities in our district boundaries it is not possible to evaluate every road or side street. This is why parents always have the right to decide in the best interest of their children and families. If you feel that it is not safe for your child to attend school, you always have the option to keep your child at home.

How you can help

Please make sure your school has an up to date phone number and email on file. Also, check the news stations and get on their email lists as well. Please don't rely on one communication method, especially the call, to get your school closing notifications. This system is used by most of the districts in our area and across the state, so when there are many calls at the same time it can take a few hours. Check social media, monitor parent square, and the news channels. Often these will be posted before the automated call is delivered to you.

Finally, we ask that everyone please be patient as we go through the process to determine if we can safely get all of our students and staff to and from school. Thank you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

Your Partner in Education,



Michael H. Darga, Superintendent
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Snow Days: *How they are decided in* Allen Park Public Schools

Recognizing that our decision to close schools in inclement weather has a large impact on APPS families, we thought it would be helpful to share the factors that go into a weather-related school closing. Our goal is to always have school, whenever possible, knowing that students are best served by being in class. However, when Mother Nature throws a curve ball, we must keep staff and student safety as our top priority when making this decision.



HOW DO WE MAKE OUR DECISION?

Several factors go into making a "snow day" call, including:

- Information on current road conditions from our transportation and maintenance crews; conditions are monitored throughout the night, and again at approximately 3:30 - 4 a.m. by APPS operations personnel.
- Amount of snow and ice accumulated
- Duration and timing of the snow and/or ice event
- Temperature and wind chill (for safety of walkers and students at bus stops) We use a -20 wind chill for a sustained amount of time as a "cold weather closure" guide.
- School building conditions (electricity, heat, water)
- School parking lot and sidewalk conditions
- Current weather conditions, along with predicted weather, but closures cannot be determined solely on predictions.
- Will buses be operational and running on schedule?
- Consultation with weather consultants and other nearby school districts



WHO MAKES THE DECISION?

The superintendent makes the final decision, based on the above factors, recommendations from our Operations Department and consultation with neighboring districts.



PARENT DECISION

As a reminder, although the district does its best in this process, we know that often, no perfect decision exists. If you feel as though it is not safe for your child to attend school, please know that you always have the option of keeping your child at home.



HOW ARE PARENTS NOTIFIED?

We spread the word in several ways, as soon as the determination is made by the superintendent:

- Automated phone call (the first phone number on each parent contact is used)
- Email via student emergency card information system (the first email address listed is used)
- District website (allenparkschools.com) posting
- Social media: District Facebook page
- All local radio and TV news stations



WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE?

Sometimes, closures are determined the evening prior, while most times they're determined during the early morning hours. The calls and emails go out as soon as possible, to give families proper planning time. We do not place phone calls earlier than 5 a.m. We do not stagger calls per grade level and we realize that a 5 a.m. call is appropriate for high school students and staff, but early for elementary, which has a later start time. Thanks for your understanding.



WILL SNOW DAYS BE VIRTUAL LEARNING DAYS?

Due to the last-minute nature of these calls, it would be difficult for our staff to transition to virtual instruction from a remote location. Therefore, snow days will remain the same as in years past and will not be remote learning days. If there are a significant number of inclement weather days this year, that could be revisited at a later date.



ARE THERE SNOW DAYS BUILT INTO THE CALENDAR?

The district does not build snow days into the calendar, but the State of Michigan allows up to six days for emergency closings.

PLEASE BE SURE THAT YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION IS ALWAYS CURRENT ON YOUR CHILD'S MISTAR ACCOUNT, ACCESSIBLE THROUGH PARENTCONNECT.