

UINTA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER ONE



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Ryan N Thomas
Superintendent for Operations

January 5, 2011

RE: School Closure and a new "Delayed Start" option

Dear Parents or Guardians,

Uinta County School District #1 understands the decision to close school due to inclement weather has an impact on families and the community. It is understood that we live in a climate where the weather can be severe at any time during the school year.

On rare occasions Evanston receives an exceptionally heavy nighttime snow which we experienced in November. If the storm continues into the morning, hazardous road conditions interfere with school buses transporting students, parents driving their students to school, students driving to school, and employees being able to get to school on time. If such conditions exist, we would like to try something new and declare a "**Delayed Start**" snow day rather than closing school for a full day.

If a "Delayed Start" snow day is announced, all school starting times and bus schedules would be moved back exactly two hours. School starting times would be delayed for two hours and all bus routes would be exactly two hours later than the normal arrival time. For example, if your bus pickup is at 7:30 a.m., the bus will arrive at the pickup location at 9:30 a.m. Starting times for the schools on a "Delayed Start" schedule are listed below.

A "Delayed Start" would allow additional time for city and county road crews to plow the streets and district employees to open schools and plow parking lots and clear sidewalks. Parents who have to work can do so, knowing bus schedules will be delayed and schools will be open after a two hour delay. Dismissal times for schools would not change.

UCSD #1 has never tried a delayed start because of the inability to contact students, parents, and staff. UCSD #1 will use a calling system called "Code Red." Once a decision is made by school officials about school closure or a delayed start, the system will notify all parents and guardians through the emergency phone numbers provided to the schools at the beginning of the school year. Code Red can make all of these calls in a matter of minutes.

When a decision has to be made regarding school closure or a delayed start, many different factors are taken into consideration; the primary factor, however, is student safety. Factors that influence school closure or a delayed start include:

- Current weather conditions including amount of snow, temperature (including wind chill), and ground effect caused by wind (drifting snow and visibility).
- Local road conditions from a variety of sources including our transportation staff, from city and county road crews, and from the Wyoming Department of Transportation.
- School building conditions including public access to school buildings and to parking (snow removal).
- The weather forecast including radar for the entire school day. We prefer not making our decision based on weather predications, which are not always accurate, but sometimes this may be unavoidable. Once students are at school they would not be sent home early except in an emergency or a major unforeseeable event (loss of power and/or heat). In such an event the district would make every effort to provide adequate notice to all parents.

School district officials will try to make a decision regarding closure no later than 6:00 a.m. at which time the code red system would notify all parents and guardians of a closure or delayed start. Also, the district's web site (www.uinta1.com) and local radio stations will be notified immediately of the closure or a delayed start. Please be aware that not all of the local radio stations are "live" at 6:00 a.m. On severe weather mornings, no announcement from UCSD #1 means that schools will be open and following normal schedules.

It is very important that parents and guardians keep the district updated with their latest phone numbers and emergency contact information. The "Code Red" system will be updated regularly by the district but can only call the phone numbers provided by parents. We are planning a test of the "Code Red" on Thursday, January 13. The system will be activated between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. with a message stating, "This is test of the Code Red system." This test will give you a sample of what to expect early in the morning if the decision is made to close or delay the start of school.

As mentioned before, it is understood that we live in a climate where the weather can be a challenge. Our job is to provide a safe and orderly environment where students can learn and grow. Every effort is made to keep schools open and operating safely. However, UCSD #1 has no control of the weather or road conditions. A delayed start gives us another way to keep students in school and manage the severe weather. Additional information will follow from your school regarding keeping your emergency information up to date and necessary details.

Sincerely,

Ryan N Thomas, Superintendent
Uinta County School District #1

James Bailey, Superintendent

	"Delayed Start"	
School		Starting and Ending times
Evanston High		10:10 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.
Davis & Evanston Middle		9:50 a.m. – 2:54 p.m.
Elementary School		11:05 a.m. – 3:40 p.m.