

Winter Weather = Delays/Closures/Early Dismissals

The weather and its impact on the school day this winter has been challenging. The perfect scenario is when six inches of snow is on the ground and the weather is obvious. However, many times the decision requires judging multiple factors.

Here's how Madison Local Schools Superintendent Curtis Philpot makes the decision to have school, delay, close, or dismiss early:

The decision process starts early. School officials monitor multiple forecasting tools, travel the roads, and check the actual conditions. Building systems and buses must be carefully checked to ensure safe and reliable operation. The road crews of Madison Township provide great service in clearing and maintaining our community's streets, and the custodians, principals and maintenance staff do a great job of monitoring building systems.

Safety First:

"Making weather related decisions is often more art than science. I will always make the decision to delay or close school with student and staff safety as the most important factor. I realize that there are families who might be inconvenienced and I apologize yet assure you that every decision is carefully decided in the best interest of students and staff," said Philpot.

Closing/Delaying/Early Dismissal for Dangerous Road Conditions

- The National Weather Service issues a Winter Weather Advisory when any amount of freezing rain, or when 2 to 4 inches of snow (alone or in combination with sleet and freezing rain), is expected to cause a significant inconvenience, but not serious enough to warrant a warning.
- The National Weather Service issues a Winter Storm Warning is issued when a significant combination of hazardous winter weather is occurring or imminent.

Closing/Delaying for Cold Weather

- The National Weather Service issues a Wind Chill Advisory when wind chills are -15 or colder.
- The National Weather Service issues a Wind Chill Warning when wind chills are -25 or colder

When the National Weather Service issues any of these advisories or warnings, MLSD will consider delaying, cancelling or dismissing early from school. Not only do these conditions put the safety of students and staff at risk, they can also have a negative impact on facilities and mechanical systems of the district (parking lots, boilers, buses, water lines, waste water plant, etc.).

When conditions warrant the National Weather Service to issue an advisory or warning, even a slight delay on a bus route (slower student pick ups, a bus stopped at a railroad crossing, bus with a mechanical problem, etc.) puts student safety at risk and must be taken into consideration.

"Waiting 20 minutes for a delayed bus on a sunny, warm day is no big deal, but waiting 20 minutes with winter weather and/or wind chills below zero is a scary scenario," said Philpot.

Communicating Closures/Delays/Early Dismissals

The Madison Local School District strives to make announcements regarding school schedules as early as possible using multiple communication channels including:

- an automated phone message to all students and staff
- a message on the district website - www.madisonmohawks.org
- a notification from the district's mobile app
- a message on the district's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts
- local radio and television stations