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Union City Area School District

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Guidelines for School Cancellations and Delays

Who Decides?

The Superintendent is required by law to ensure that the schools are open on all scheduled days unless conditions are unsafe for students. Consequently, the Superintendent must decide if conditions warrant a change in the normal schedule.

When is the Decision Made?

When extreme weather conditions are forecast, the decision is often made the preceding evening in order to give parents additional time to make necessary arrangements for their children. As we live in an area that can historically have rapid changing weather, making a decision the evening before is not always possible. Under normal circumstances, the process of gathering relevant information begins at approximately 3:30 a.m. Every effort is made to make decisions regarding delays and cancellations by 5:30 a.m.

Who Provides Relevant Information?

District's Transportation Provider, Local and National Weather Service, The Weather Channel (<https://weather.com>), Township and Borough personnel (when appropriate), School personnel in surrounding school districts (when appropriate), and Communication from Erie County Department of Public Safety (Emergency Management Coordinator).

What are the Primary Reasons for a Delay or Cancellation?

- Extreme cold temperatures that could be unsafe for students.
- Road conditions that are too dangerous for the school buses to travel.

What are the Guidelines Regarding Extreme Cold?

According to the National Weather Service, no specific rules exist for determining when wind chill becomes dangerous. However, the threshold for potentially dangerous wind chill conditions is about -20°F to -25°F. If the National Weather Service has issued a Wind Chill Advisory and wind chill predictions are for temperatures of -20 to -25°F ° or colder at 5:30 AM, a delay may be called.

Note that there may be warmer or cooler areas within the District. The -20°F to -25°F wind chill guideline is a threshold at which point a delay will be considered. The District relies on the available temperature reports which may not reflect the conditions at your location.

If the National Weather service issues a Wind Chill Warning, a delay will be called. School cancellation is possible.

What is the Critical Question Regarding the Safety of the Roads?

The critical question is: Can school buses traveling at safe speeds get students to school safely and reasonably “on time?” The question is not: Is it snowing or are some roads slippery? That answer could be yes, but that does not always mean that buses cannot travel safely.

Note: If an unexpected squall or lake effect snow band arises once transportation of students begins, it is usually not possible to cancel or delay bus runs in progress.

How Does the School District Communicate the Delay or Cancellation?

Each time a decision to delay or cancel school is made, the media is notified. Additionally, the District utilizes a mass notification system which will call a home, cellular telephone, send a text, and /or email (depending on how a parent has set-up their PowerSchool account) in order to notify families of a delay or cancellation. Please obtain information from these sources.

What about an Unscheduled Early Dismissal?

The same procedures are used for dismissals as delays as well as notifications.

What about Students Who Attend Non-Public Schools/Vo-Tech/RCI/Dual-Enrollment Requiring Transportation?

If Union City Area School District is closed, there is no transportation for non-public school students, or students enrolled in other settings.

What Decision Should Parents Make?

The Superintendent will make a decision in the best interest of the District at large. Parents always have the responsibility for making decisions that are in the best interest of the health and safety of their own children. Parents may decide to keep their child at home due to factors such as age, health, attendance, academics, distance from the bus stop, road conditions unique to their area, bus stop waiting area, length of the bus ride, etc. In those situations, the School District will honor the decision of the parent who assesses the individual circumstance and acts accordingly. Parents may also choose to transport their child to school.

What is the Recommendation for Winter Dress?

Frequent heavy snow and cold temperatures are normal during the winter season. Students should always wear an appropriate coat, hat, gloves, and boots during winter weather.

Please know that your student’s health and safety are at the forefront of all of our decisions.

Sincerely,



Matthew W. Bennett
Superintendent
Union City Area School District