

How does school get canceled due to weather?



WISCONSIN RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Parents may be interested to know how school closure decisions get made when inclement weather sweeps across our area. The number one priority in every closure decision is the safety of our students, and what is in the best interest of all students. When schools close, we lose valuable learning time with your child(ren), and many families have concerns or complications surrounding childcare. Furthermore, there may be times when parents feel differently about whether school should be open or closed based upon the weather. Should this happen, the District encourages parents to make a decision that they believe is best for their child's health and safety.

Decisions to close school are not taken lightly; and a great deal of thought and communication is involved in the process. Following are some details about what is involved in the weather-related school closure process, and how a final decision gets made:

As the Superintendent of Schools, I monitor weather conditions relative to snow/ice precipitation and gather input and feedback from all appropriate sources including meteorologists, transportation providers, and area highway personnel and/or law enforcement agencies that have personnel out driving on our roadways. Additionally, in cases of extremely cold temperatures and/or wind chills, a decision to close generally comes into play when temperatures will continue to remain around 35 degrees below zero or lower.

I will make every attempt to make a school closure decision as early as possible, and in no case later than 6:30 a.m. of the morning when school is to be in session. When feasible, decisions are made on the evening prior to the school day so that parents can make the appropriate arrangements necessary for childcare, if needed. Unfortunately, this early decision is not always possible given the unique weather patterns of Wisconsin.

You can find out about school closure decisions in a variety of ways:

- ⇒ Through email, text, and phone alerts generated by our ParentSquare notification system – you can sign up for these alerts through your “Family Access” account
- ⇒ By liking the District Facebook page, and Instagram you will see inclement weather-

related posts from WRPS come up in your newsfeed (facebook.com/wrpsdistrict, Instagram/@wrpsdistrict)

- ⇒ By going to our www.wrps.org webpage – weather closure alerts get posted at the top of the main District page, once a decision has been made
- ⇒ By listening to local radio and television news stations

Note that when school gets canceled, all other activities scheduled in school buildings for that day may be canceled. As outlined in policy, ***it is possible that certain dates will be designated as Remote Learning Days*** – your school will individually communicate more about expectations for students on these dates when they occur.

Once school begins for the day, schools generally will not dismiss early unless absolutely necessary in order to avoid complications with transportation and childcare arrangements. Again, the safety of our students is always at the forefront of the decision-making process.

A decision to close during the school day will occur by 10:00 a.m., and lunches will be served to students in grades KG-12 before they are dismissed. **Middle school students will be dismissed first at 12:00 p.m., followed by Lincoln High students at 12:20 p.m.; and the elementary students will dismiss last at 1:00 p.m.** Afternoon sessions for our 4K and River Cities High School programs are automatically canceled if we close early. Communication to parents about an early release is similar – via ParentSquare, our District webpage and social media pages, and various local media outlets.

School closure decisions are not always popular, and I can appreciate that parents may have different opinions about whether or not school should be canceled. Again, we always leave the final decision up to parents about whether to keep their child(ren) home if they feel this is best for their circumstance.

We sincerely appreciate your understanding and support when school closure decisions become necessary on inclement weather days. The decisions are not always easy, but they are definitely made with the best interest of all students in mind.

If you have questions concerning this information, feel free to contact me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ronald A. Rasmussen'.

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