



Superintendent's Office

Craig G. Broeren, Superintendent
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October 23, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

It is the time of year when closure of schools due to inclement weather becomes a very real possibility. Since we are also continuing to deal with the pandemic, I thought it was appropriate to provide some additional details regarding how we will handle school closure days for the 2020-21 school year.

While it is true that we have the capability of moving to fully off-site or virtual for a short or extended period of time, there is still something to be said about making solid attempts at retaining the "magic" and "excitement" our students experience when Mother Nature decides to make travel treacherous resulting in a school closure. To that end, our administrative team has discussed the idea of allowing a certain number of "snow days" to continue to be true "snow days"; meaning, students would not be assigned work to be completed even though we easily have that capability. On a side note, as a result of ramping up our off-site and virtual capabilities, we will likely never be in a position to have to add days to the calendar or extend the school day in the future as we were required to do in 2018-2019 after 8 closures due to inclement weather. Even given this, please understand that school closures will never be taken lightly and are ultimately made based upon the safety of our students and staff; our goal remains to have kids in school and/or engaged in academics as much as possible.

Admittedly, the A/B cohort schedule implemented at Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School (WRAMS) and Lincoln High School (LHS) poses some potential issues with regard to a balanced approach to meeting in-person if closure due to inclement weather occurs consistently affecting one of the two cohorts (e.g., nearly every "snow day" happens to fall on a Monday or Tuesday impacting only cohort A students). It is clear that there is truly no way of determining what may or may not occur; however, we will still need somewhat of a plan for as many possibilities as we can. Therefore, while you will see a District-wide alert go out as normal when a school closure takes place, expectations of students at LHS and WRAMS on school closure days will be communicated to parents and students by their school. We will make our best attempt at allowing students a true "snow day" or two as outlined above; however, there may be a need to have student contact virtually and/or assignments provided if school closures adversely impact one cohort over the other. River Cities High School (RCHS) and our elementary buildings will also communicate expectations to families as necessary; however, since our RCHS and elementary students are attending 5 days per week, it is reasonable to allow up to two snow days per school year in which student work and expectations are not required. As usual, our staff will still be available via email, etc., during snow days for parents and students if necessary.

I have also enclosed our traditional inclement weather day procedure information for your review and awareness. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 715-424-6701 or by email at craig.broeren@wrps.net.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Broeren', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Craig G. Broeren
Superintendent

Enclosure

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 Skylert notification system – you can sign up for these alerts through your “Family Access” account

- ⇒ By liking the District Facebook page, you will see inclement weather-related posts from WRPS come up in your newsfeed (facebook.com/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
- ⇒ You can sign up for community related alerts through Nixle and receive a variety of school district, law enforcement, and other notifications for our area which you may find of interest
- ⇒ 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 are also canceled.

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 Skylert, our District webpage and social media pages, Nixle, 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 'Craig Broeren'.

Craig Broeren
Superintendent
craig.broeren@wrps.net
715-424-6701



**WISCONSIN RAPIDS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



**2020-2021 ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY STATEMENT
INCLEMENT WEATHER DAY PROCEDURES**

CANCELLATION

If bad weather during the night makes it impossible for buses to run in the morning, the following procedure will be used:

Announcements will be made using our Skylert system for parents, posts on the WRPS District webpage (www.wrps.org), the Nixle alert system, and also reported to these media outlets **as early as possible**, but in no case later than 6:30 a.m.:

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| WGLX (103.3 FM) | WFHR (AM 1320) | WSPT (97.9 FM) | WAXX (104.5 FM) | WIFC (95.5 FM) |
| BIG CHEESE (107.9 FM) | WDLB (AM 1450) | WKQH (B 104.9FM) | WAYY (AM 790) | WDEZ (101.9 FM) |
| WYTE (106.5 FM) | WLJY (105.5 FM) | WPCN (AM 1010) | I-94 (94.1 FM) | WRIG (AM 1390) |
| HOT (96.7 FM) | WOSQ (92.3 FM) | WAOW-TV 9 | WSAW-TV 7 | WOZZ (94.7 FM) |
| | | | | WSAU (AM 550 or 99.9FM) |

EARLY DISMISSAL

If bad weather develops during the morning while school is in session, the following procedure will be used:

- ◆ Lunches will be served before the students are dismissed. (There is no lunch for 4K students.)
- ◆ Buses will run according to the following schedule:

Middle School	12:00 p.m.	
Assumption High School	12:10 p.m.	
Lincoln High School	12:20 p.m.	
River Cities High School (a.m. session)	11:00 a.m. (as usual)	*** Afternoon RCHS sessions will be canceled.
Elementary Schools (Public & Parochial)	1:00 p.m.	*** Afternoon early education unit sessions will be canceled.
Morning 4-Year Old Kindergarten Session	10:45 a.m.	*** Afternoon 4K sessions will be canceled.

Announcements of the early dismissal will be made on the above listed stations by 10:00 a.m., advising parents that their children will be sent home early.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

If an event or trip is canceled, it is the responsibility of the coach/advisor to inform the participants (the news stations listed above may be used for this communication). The safety of our students and staff is the primary consideration when making these decisions. While the "importance" of an event, the difficulties of rescheduling, and other inconveniences are recognized; safety is the only issue that is a factor in these decisions. Your cooperation, understanding, and assistance in these matters will be appreciated.

Questions regarding this Administrative Policy Statement should be referred to Superintendent Craig Broeren at 715-424-6701.


Craig Broeren
Superintendent



*LIKE our WRPS
Facebook account, or
follow us on Twitter to
get up-to-date weather
closure information!*