

WEATHER RELATED SCHOOL CLOSURES

Snow Day Plan of Action: Winter is Coming

In most circumstances, the decision to close school due to weather will be made and notified between 5:30 and 6:00 AM. Please know that the timing of specific weather events may impact this notification time. When the decision to close school is made, parents and staff members will receive an email and text message through School Messenger. School Messenger is updated each evening by connecting with PowerSchool. The primary phone number and email address provided by the parent/guardian will be the contact information used for these messages. If you have not provided the most updated phone or email address to your child's school, you will not be contacted. If your phone number or email address changes throughout the school year it is important that you make the appropriate changes to our PowerSchool system.

In addition to the parent/staff email and text, a message will be sent to media groups (KXLY TV, KLEW TV, Inland Northwest News Radio/NWPR, and KQQQ/KHTR Radio), and other local non-MSD school, county, and city administrators. Once all parties have been notified via email and text a post will be made on our school district website (msd281.org) and Facebook page (facebook.com/moscow281). Please hit the Like or Follow button on our Facebook as it is a great way to stay up to date on changes in our District and to see some of the great things happening in all of our schools!!

Frequently asked questions regarding school closures are:

- **How are snow days decided?**

Beginning around 4 AM, the District Transportation team, made up of our Superintendent, Operations Director, and Transportation Supervisor begin to monitor the current and predicted state of the roads. The following systems are utilized to make the best decisions:

- Radio/phone check-ins with city and county road crews.
- Physically driving around city and county roads to confirm conditions.
- Monitoring online weather and road conditions sites as well as traffic cameras.

After a final group meeting, a decision will be made to either have school or cancel the school day. Our goal is to have this decision made by 5:15 AM with the understanding that the timing of a weather event may not make this timeline possible.

- **Why does the Moscow School District not utilize a two-hour delayed start on questionable days?**

The Moscow School District has historically not utilized a two-hour delayed start for multiple reasons. There are many factors to consider when deciding whether or not to implement a two-hour delay. These factors include the disruption to multi section classes that must stay on the same schedule, the limited learning that would occur on shortened days, the availability of bus driving staff, the potential disruption to parent's schedules, the shortage of bus drivers and paraprofessional staff and others. As a District we are always open to change and review this practice on an annual basis but for this current school year we do not believe that a two-hour delayed start is beneficial to the students or the school district.

- **Will the District announce an early release if the weather gets worse throughout the day?**

In rare circumstances the Moscow School District may consider the early release of students for weather events. This would only occur at the recommendation of road crews, or a clear and accurate weather forecast that indicates early release is the safest solution. We would only make such a call in a worst-case scenario. However, we do encourage parents to pick up their child at their earliest convenience if they believe the increasingly poor conditions will make it hard to get home safely. We also strongly encourage parents to arrange a ride for their child in extremely cold or windy conditions.

- **Can I keep my student at home if school is open, when I believe it is in the best interest for my child to remain home?**

Yes, you always have the right to keep your child home when you believe it is in their best interest regardless of whether a “snow day” is called. Students who miss a day of school will be marked absent. Our district has a 90% attendance requirement, which means that your child has a limit of 9 days per semester that can be missed. We encourage attendance every day, but this does provide the flexibility for you to make decisions that are in the best interest of your student.

Sincerely,

Shawn Tiegs

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