

Morgan County Schools

Procedures for School Closure for Bad Weather

Cold weather brings the possibility of school closure due to snow and ice accumulations on roads. When bad weather strikes, Morgan County school administrators will use regular means to notify parents, students, employees, and the community. School decisions about closure will be communicated to the Knoxville television stations (Channel 6, 8, and 10) and WECO Radio. TV stations will broadcast this information on the air and also post to their websites.

The AlertNow notification system will again be used this year by school administrators to announce school closure. The phone numbers in the AlertNow system are pulled from the student database. At the beginning of each year, students and parents are asked to provide contact information that is placed in the student database. It is important for parents/guardians and family members to update any changes in phone numbers by contacting the school where your child is enrolled.

Cancellation of school due to bad weather may occur in three ways:

1. School closure for entire day or
2. Delayed start (2 hrs) or
3. Early dismissal

School closure decisions are made more difficult if bad weather strikes during the night or early morning hours. In such cases, every effort will be made to make a decision before 6:00am, and then begin the public notification process. This notice would be either closure for the day or delayed start of two (2) hours.

Schools may also be required to dismiss early due to inclement weather. In such cases, we will first inform the administration of each school regarding the established dismissal time. Bus drivers will be contacted, and an orderly dismissal plan will be followed. The news will be distributed through the methods mentioned previously. Parents are encouraged to inform children and school officials of alternative child care arrangements that may be required on such days. Parents may also wish to discuss these procedures with teenagers who drive to school. Adequate supervision will be provided by school employees. If dismissal occurs near midday or early afternoon, every effort will be made to serve lunch.

We certainly do not wish to put students or employees in danger due to bad weather conditions. Safety is the primary consideration. Every effort will be made to make wise decisions based upon the best information that can be

obtained. The varying weather conditions that can exist in Morgan County also add to the difficulty of such decisions. Occasionally, snowy weather strikes only a portion of the county, but all schools will be closed.

Bus drivers know the challenges of driving on Morgan County roads. Our drivers are encouraged to use their professional judgment as to whether a road has become impassable. In such cases, drivers may not run some routes or students may be kept safely on the bus or at school until other transportation can be arranged. In the event a bus driver cannot complete his/her route due to road conditions, all bus drivers are authorized to seek a "safe harbor" at any Morgan County School. Principals have the responsibility to accept students and drivers during an emergency, whether the students are assigned to their school or are from another school. Schools will be prepared to provide shelter, restroom facilities, food if needed, and allow students to contact a parent or guardian.

If you have any questions about these procedures, please call the Bus Transportation Department (346-3730), the Central Office (346-6214), or administrative offices at the schools.