



WARREN TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 121

November 23, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As the winter season approaches, our District staff understands that our decision to 1) delay the start of school, 2) close school in bad weather, or 3) utilize an eLearning day which has a big effect on families. We also understand that our students are better served both academically and socially by physically being in school. But as always, our top priority is the safety of our students.

<http://www.d121.org>

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Please see the attached eLearning plan for details.

How do we make our decision?

Please understand that we make the decision to delay the start or close the school in bad weather based on a careful analysis of all relevant factors, such as:

- **Information on road conditions from the transportation staff and from the police.** We must give careful consideration to the most dangerous roads in the District. Even if your street looks clear, travel elsewhere in the District may be dangerous. Also, we must consider that some high school students drive to school.
- **Amount of snow and ice accumulated.**
- **Whether precipitation is continuing.**
- **Building conditions (such as whether we have electricity and heat).**
- **Parking lot conditions.** Administrators talk to maintenance and custodial staff members who are responsible for clearing and treating school parking lots and sidewalks.
- **Temperature and wind chill.** Please remember that some of our students walk to school and some must wait outside for the bus.
- **Weather predictions.** We prefer not making our decision based on weather predictions, which are not always accurate. But sometimes this is unavoidable.

Who makes the decision?

As the Superintendent, I am responsible for the final decision, based on the factors mentioned and consultation from our elementary districts, the Director of Transportation and the Director of Buildings and Grounds.

How is the public notified?

See the bottom of this letter about emergency closing notification information. You can check our District website, www.d121.org for information. You will also be receiving a rapid communication phone call on all of the phone numbers which you provided during the registration process this past August.

When is the decision made?

I must make the decision by 5:30 a.m. or earlier so we can notify radio and TV stations and post the decision on our website. If I wait longer to announce a change in the normal schedule, some parents will have already left for work, leaving their children unsupervised.

Will we close school if conditions worsen?

Keep in mind that even if weather conditions worsen, we cannot reverse our decision in the morning without endangering students. Once we make the decision to open the schools, many parents rely on that decision and leave for work.

If we then send students right back home, many will return to unsupervised bus stops and empty houses. If conditions get worse during the school day, we may need to have an early dismissal, but we will give adequate notice to all parents first.

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Although the Administrative staff and I do our absolute best in this process, we know that often no perfect decision exists. If you do not feel as though it is safe for your child to attend school, use your best judgment on whether he or she should attend. I encourage you to discourage teenagers from driving in bad conditions and I am suggesting you offer them alternative strategies as weather conditions worsen.

In addition, we will have school on many days when it is very chilly outside and we always hope our students are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions.

We hope that this explanation helps everyone understand the process that our staff uses to make the best possible decision for the District.

Sincerely,

John P. Ahlgrim, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Is your contact information correct
in PowerSchool?
powerschool.wths.net

In the event of an emergency and school must be delayed or closed, information will be available through the following sources.

847-662-1400

The main number to school will have a recorded message.

www.d121.org

The WTHS webpage will have the current information as soon as a decision has been made for emergency action.

<https://www.facebook.com/WTHSDistrict121>

WTHS Facebook, Twitter and Instagram will have the current information as soon as a decision has been made for emergency action.

www.EmergencyClosings.com

The Emergency Closing Center will have the current information for a delayed start or closing when it is posted. You can sign up for an automatic email through the Emergency Closing Center.

The local **radio stations** will be notified of the emergency information:

WGN Radio 720 AM
WBBM Radio 780 AM

The local **television stations** will be notified of the emergency information.

CBS – Channel 2
NBC – Channel 5
ABC – Channel 7
WGN – Channel 9
Fox 32
CLTV Cable