

ARCADIA VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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January 9, 2024

NOTICE

INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION

Dear Parent(s) and Guardian(s):

The winter season is upon us. Our district staff understands that our decisions to open or close schools in bad weather have a big impact on families. We also understand that our students are better served—both academically and socially—by being in school. But, as always, our top priority is the safety of our students.

HOW DO WE MAKE OUR DECISIONS?

Please understand that we make the decisions to open or close the schools in bad weather based on a careful analysis of all relevant factors, such as:

- **Information on road conditions from transportation staff and other pertinent officials.** 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 from various locations in our district.
- **The 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 buses.
- **Weather predictions.** We prefer not making decisions based on weather predictions, which are not always accurate. However, sometimes this is unavoidable. If inclement weather that would affect travel to and from school appears extremely likely from the various weather forecasters, we may call off school ahead of the weather. We all know weather forecasters are not always right, especially here in Missouri. Regardless, we would rather make up a day in May than risk a child's safety to or from school.

HOW IS THE PUBLIC NOTIFIED?

First and foremost, we notify our parents and students using our district notification system. The notification system calls phone numbers that are on file in our building offices. Please make sure the phone numbers on file with our school district are correct.

Closings are also given to a number of radio and TV stations: Tune to KTJJ (FM 98.5), FOX 2 News, NEWSCHANNEL 5, and KFVS TV (Cape).

WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE?

The decision is normally made by 6:30 a.m. or earlier so we can notify radio and TV stations and our transportation department before the first student is picked up. Every effort is made to announce a closing as quickly as possible knowing some parents will have already left for work, leaving their children unsupervised. **When able, we prefer to make the decision the evening prior, so as to give parents more time to find a place for their kids the next day.** The most difficult decisions to make are those when sleet or freezing rain occur after buses have already left for their morning routes. The district communicates with our drivers and monitors road conditions.

WILL WE CLOSE SCHOOL IF CONDITIONS WORSEN?

Keep in mind that, even if the weather worsens, it is very difficult to reverse our decision in the morning without endangering students. Once we make the decision to open the schools, many parents rely on it and leave for work. If we then send students right back home, many will return to unsupervised bus stops and empty houses. **Therefore, the Arcadia Valley R-II School District currently has a policy that we DO NOT release for early dismissals due to inclement weather.** However, parents may always pick up their students from school early if they feel it is necessary for the child's safety.

Although we try to do our absolute best, we know that often no perfect decision exists. If you do not feel as though it is safe for your child to attend school because of inclement weather, use your best judgment on whether he or she should attend.

Hopefully, this explanation helps everyone understand the process that our district uses to make the best possible decisions for the safety of all our students and staff.

Sincerely,



Dr. Brian Beard, Superintendent
Arcadia Valley R-II School District