

## **Inclement Weather and School**

### **Beliefs**

- MSD of Decatur Township respects a parent's determination regarding their child's attendance at school during inclement weather. If school is open, or delayed, because of inclement weather, the school will respect the parent's decision to keep their child at home. Parents are expected to contact the school and inform school officials of their determination. The student will be counted as absent, per state code, and students will be given an opportunity to complete their academic work in the same manner as an excused absence from school.
- MSD of Decatur Township believes the public expects schools to be open and to provide education, supervision, and other services (including meals) to its students.
- MSD of Decatur Township believes all parents are committed to keeping children safe, and parents will dress their children appropriately for the weather when sending the children to school.
- MSD of Decatur Township believes its parents often do more than expected, and often seek out ways to assist children from other families with shared transportation to school. This high level of commitment and cooperation is sincerely appreciated.
- Variable weather conditions are to be expected in Central Indiana. MSD of Decatur Township believes its parents have plans in place for weather related delays and closures and believe morning notification is generally appropriate.

### **Delaying or Closing School is Based on Multiple Variables**

#### **Freezing Rain/Sleet**

- The most unpredictable weather variable is freezing rain/sleet. Freezing rain/sleet is temperature sensitive and fast-occurring. It begins and ends with little notice. When freezing rain/sleet is predicted, the decision regarding school is delayed until the latest possible time in an effort to observe the most current and local conditions. Such a decision generally will be made in the morning.

#### **Snowfall**

- Snowfall is more predictable than freezing rain/sleet. Meteorologists generally give a 2 inch variable when predicting snow accumulation. Because the variation in actual snowfall, when compared to predicted snowfall, the decision regarding school status is delayed until the snow accumulation indicates a need for action. Such a decision, except in extreme situations, will generally be made in the morning.

#### **Extreme Snowfall Situations**

- When snow has accumulated to a significant level, or is at such a level with more snowfall predicted, then the decision regarding school may be made the previous evening. A significant level is one in which local authorities have indicated it is unlikely streets will be passable by the following morning. This is an unlikely, but possible occurrence.

**Extreme Cold**

- Temperature prediction is increasingly accurate. MSD Decatur Township uses the hourly temperature predictions for its zip code from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (noaa.gov). If air temperature is predicted by NOAA to be -10 degrees or below (the starting point for wind chill concerns with calm wind) at 7:00 a.m. the school will **consider** a two hour delay for the start of school. If the air temperature is predicted to remain at -10 degrees or below at 9:00 a.m. the school will **consider** closing. Such a determination will be made as early as possible, perhaps the evening before, but certainly by 6:00 a.m. in the morning.

**Extreme Wind Chill**

- Wind chill prediction is not as accurate as temperature prediction because wind speed is more variable by time and location. While NOAA observations and predictions are based upon the open conditions of the Indianapolis Airport, these conditions are often different in some of the wind barricaded neighborhoods of MSD Decatur Township. Local observations of wind speed will affect the decision regarding delaying or closing school. Wind chill concerns emerge at a predicted wind chill temperature of -19 degrees. If wind chill is predicted by NOAA to be -19 degrees or below and local wind conditions are predicted to mirror the airport wind conditions at 7:00 a.m., the school will **consider** a two hour delay for the start of school. If the wind chill is predicted to remain at -19 degrees or below and local conditions mirror the airport wind conditions at 9:00 a.m., the school will **consider** closing. The variability of wind speed will likely cause this decision to be made in the morning.

**Functional Facilities**

- Utility issues (gas, electricity, water) may cause a school to close. Issues associated with cold, including water supply to a building and electricity to a building or neighborhood, may cause school to be canceled.

**Other Related Topics****eLearning**

- The State of Indiana allows school districts to implement up to 3 asynchronous (non-live instruction) eLearning days per school year. MSD of Decatur Township will utilize these days first in the event of inclement weather. Subsequent eLearning days beyond 3 will be designated as synchronous (live video instruction 50% of instructional day) or complete school closure, with make-up days as determined by district administration.
- Teachers will deliver content for eLearning via Canvas and/or Webex. Look for ParentSquare communication.

**Extra Curricular Activities**

- When school is closed due to inclement weather, no practices, rehearsals, or meetings under the sole control of MSD Decatur Township shall occur.
- Given that a game time or performance time may be more than 10 hours after the decision to close school is made, and understanding the weather conditions can significantly improve over the course of a day, the decision regarding inter-school athletic contests and major performances shall be made on a case-by-case basis by the school administration.

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- A contractual obligation to participate in an away activity may be honored in a situation where a mutually agreeable resolution (postponement or cancellation) cannot be identified.
- Commitments to local and state tournaments shall be honored, to the greatest extent possible.