

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE
11-1
SCHOOL CANCELLATION PROCEDURES
Inclement Weather and/or Other Conditions

WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE AND HOW IS THE PUBLIC NOTIFIED?

When school is cancelled due to inclement weather or other conditions announcements will be made as early as possible. Television/media sites will be notified as close to 5-5:30 a.m., again as early as possible. A “**connect-ed**” call will be made approximately 6:15 -6:30 a.m. You may find the announcements on the following media sites:

- Local Television: Channels 4, 5, 7 and 25 (FOX)
 - Methuen Local Television Comcast - 10
 - Methuen Local Television Verizon - 31
- Radio: WCCM (1110 AM)
- Connect-ED call (approximately 6:30 a.m.)

When able, announcements will be made the evening prior to an anticipated storm.

HOW DO WE MAKE THE DECISION?

We make the decision to open or close the schools in inclement weather based on whether school busses can safely travel and the school facilities are in working order. We consider several factors, such as:

- Information on road conditions from transportation staff and police department. We must give careful consideration to the most dangerous roads in the city. Even if your street looks clear, travel elsewhere in the city may be dangerous.
- Consideration of sidewalks and busstops.
- The amount of snow and/or ice that has accumulated.
- Availability of busses in severe cold weather.
- Weather predictions. This is especially true if school is already in session when the inclement weather begins.
- Building conditions, such as interrupted electricity, heat, and water supply.
- Temperature and wind chill.
- What other school districts are doing. We also share information with other local districts and check on whether they are opening or closing.

WHO MAKES THE DECISION?

The Superintendent is responsible for the final decision based on the above factors and recommendations from the Facilities Director, DPW, Police Chief, Fire Chief and Transportation Supervisor.

WILL WE CLOSE SCHOOL IF CONDITIONS WORSEN?

Generally speaking, we cannot reverse our decision in the morning without endangering students. Once we make the decision to open schools, many parents rely on it and leave for work. If we then send students back home, many will return to unsupervised bus stops and empty houses.

However, if conditions get significantly worse during the school day, we may need to have: an early dismissal, P.M. preschool cancellation, after school/evening activities cancellation... We will try to give as much notice as possible to schools and parents through all our media sites listed above. So we encourage you to keep an eye on media sites in inclement weather.

WHAT DOES THIS DECISION MEAN?

1. All daytime and evening activities within the school system will be cancelled for the day e.g. athletic activities, plays, parent/teacher conferences... High School athletic activities will be cancelled, as required, by the Athletic Director, who will notify the Superintendent.
2. The School Age Child Care Program will be opened as usual unless otherwise noted.
3. When the decision is made to close school, the Superintendent will start her no school chain, which notifies building principals and other administrators. Each school is encouraged to devise a "no school call chain" to notify staff and a "no work call chain for 52 week employees.

WHAT SHOULD PARENTS DO?

4. Make sure all emergency contact information provided to school is up to date, including address, phone numbers, and names of emergency contacts.
5. Monitor communications sites as listed above.
6. In order to keep phone lines open, please try to avoid calling schools.
7. Have a back-up plan for child care and school transportation in case of schedule change.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

Although we 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. Also, discourage teenagers or inexperienced drivers from driving in potentially bad conditions.