

Cycles of Success

Sample Emergency School Closing Letter to Parents

Dear Parents:

As we enter the winter months, I feel the need to communicate with you on the important issue of emergency closing of the school district. I have received input from both parents and staff members on this topic. As a school district, we know of the many plans for childcare that come with snow and other inclement weather conditions. I want to take a few moments to outline our district's procedures for closings and delays and request your understanding as we begin the winter months.

Adjust as necessary - From early November through early April, district transportation personnel cover district roads beginning around 4:45 each morning. This coverage includes roads in all towns in our school district. In some weather conditions, district personnel speak with Department of Transportation personnel as well. If there is a safety concern, I am notified and will speak with the transportation personnel. Sometimes I drive the roads myself to get a better feel for the conditions.

In the vast majority of circumstances, the decision to close or delay is made by [] AM and called into local television and radio stations. Decisions to delay are made for one of two reasons: (1) when the weather bureau has indicated that the conditions present between 6:45 - 8:00 AM will be temporary and improving weather is expected, or (2) the weather bureau has expressed uncertainty and I feel we may need more time to make a decision on whether school should be closed. I encourage everyone to listen to more than one local station since these stations are barraged with calls and many make inadvertent mistakes as to what district is delayed or closed.

There are a few more points that I would like to make:

1. School buses are very safe for children to be in - they are heavy, well maintained and driven by well-trained and qualified individuals here at []. In inclement weather conditions, students are much safer in buses than in cars.
2. Snow itself rarely closes school. The fact that there is a snowstorm approaching shouldn't be overly concerning. Visibility, road conditions, ice build-up and the status of plowing are more important issues to consider. Four to eight inches of snow in this area are the norm.

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The district understands that many families need to make alternate arrangements for their children when school is delayed, canceled, or dismissed early. These are stressful times for many parents. The whereabouts and safety concerns of children are paramount for parents and educators. The best advice I can give is to work on developing a network of support that can react and adjust to changing conditions when weather becomes a problem. Planning ahead is important - for parents and the school district. As a parent, I know it is not easy.

PLEASE NOTE! If you are a parent of a K-5 student and need to update any information (emergency or otherwise) on your child's data card, please call [000-000] for grades K-2 [000-000] for grades 3-5 and a new card will be mailed to you.

I want to reiterate that parents are the final authority as to whether or not you believe it is safe for your child to go to school. If you believe that it is too cold or the snow is too deep or the weather is too unsettled, your decision may be to keep your child home.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

(Name)
Superintendent of Schools