



## **INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SCHOOL**

### **Beliefs**

- Weather-related decisions are based on numerous variables. Decisions are made regarding the safety of our students and staff on their way to and from school. Please understand that often the main roads and city roads have been cleared, but many county roads are not passable. We frequently see widely different conditions from one part of our district to the next, given the various terrains from one side of our county to the other.
- Parents have a child-specific perspective regarding their child and the threat of inclement weather.
- A parent may decide for their child, and the school corporation will respect the perspective of the parent regarding their child.
- Madison Consolidated Schools 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 parents' decision to keep their child at home. Parents are expected to contact the school and inform school officials of their decision. The student will be counted as absent (excused), per state code, and students will be allowed to complete their work in the same way as an excused absence from school.
- Madison Consolidated Schools believes our community expects schools to be open and to provide education, supervision, and other services (including meals) to students when it is safe to do so.
- MCS believes all parents are committed to keeping children safe, and these parents will dress their children appropriately for the weather when sending students to school.
- Variable weather conditions are to be expected in our area. Madison Consolidated Schools will assess weather conditions and notify parents promptly, with the understanding that conditions can change and forecasts are predictions that may or may not be accurate. In most cases, parents will be notified in the morning if a delay or closure is needed.

### **Notifications**

Notification of closures or delays will be immediately disseminated through a variety of platforms. When possible, decisions about school delays due to inclement weather will be made no later than 6:00 a.m. It is possible that a school cancellation may follow a two-hour delay. If there is a two-hour delay, we will try to decide to cancel school by 8:00 a.m.

- Emails, text messages, and/or phone calls will be made through ParentSquare/StudentSquare. Please be sure that your account is activated and that all of your contact information in Skyward is kept up to date. If neither of these is done, you may not receive the information.
- MCS website - madison.k12.in.us - will have the school status listed on the homepage.
- MCS social media feeds - @MCS\_Indiana on Instagram and Facebook.
- Regional TV and local radio stations:  
FOX 41, WLKY 32, WORX/WXGO, WHAS 11, WMPI, WIKI, WAVE 3, and WKKG

### CONSIDERATIONS AND DETERMINING FACTORS

When the possibility of inclement weather is a concern, MCS uses multiple resources to assist in making the best decision with the information available. The decision to close school or alter the school day is made with much deliberation and input from our internal transportation team, local city and county law enforcement, and INDOT resources, with a combination of tools and resources available. Below are some of the factors we use to determine what action we may take.

#### **Fog**

- Fog can be very tricky. Like all weather situations, the timing is critical. Fog can move in and blanket the area quickly. We will consider how visibility is greatly impacted and always consider student safety first. Decisions regarding fog delays will be made by 6:00 a.m.

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

- The most unpredictable weather variable is freezing rain/sleet. Freezing rain/sleet is temperature-sensitive and occurs quickly. It begins and ends with little notice. When freezing rain/sleet is predicted, the school decision is delayed until the latest possible time in an effort to observe the most current and local conditions. This decision will generally 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 of 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 circumstances, will generally be made in the morning.
- Roads will be driven by District Officials around 4:00 a.m. to determine the safety and drivability for school buses and student drivers while also seeking feedback from other partners, such as law enforcement and INDOT.

#### **Extreme Snowfall Situations**

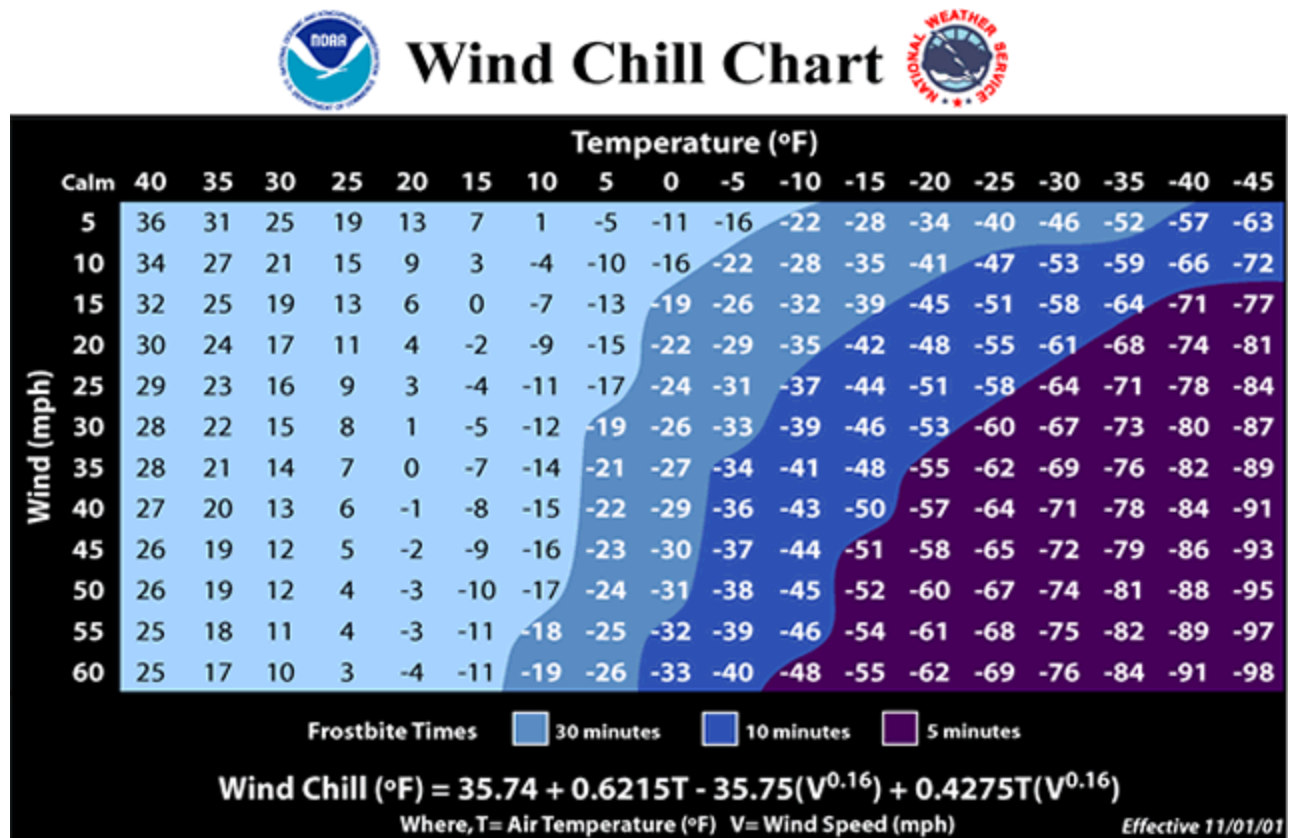
- When snow has accumulated to a significant level, or has accumulated with more snowfall than predicted, then the school decision may be made the previous evening. In a possible, though less likely scenario, local authorities may indicate that it is unlikely roads will be passable by the following morning.
- Travel warnings and advisories will all be considered in the decision to close or delay.

## Extreme Cold

- Temperature prediction is increasingly accurate. MCS uses the hourly temperature predictions for its zip codes 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 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 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 a.m.

## Extreme Wind Chill

- Wind chill prediction is not as accurate as temperature prediction because wind speed is more variable by time and location. Local observations of wind speed will affect the decision regarding delaying or closing schools. Wind chill concerns emerge at a predicted wind chill temperature of -19 degrees. If the wind chill is predicted by NOAA to be -19 degrees or below at 7 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 at 9 a.m., the school will consider closing. The variability of wind speed will likely cause this decision to be made in the morning.



## Severe Storm Threat

- In the event of a severe thunderstorm, high wind warning, or tornado event, we will watch the timing of the forecast. In the event we would need to delay the start or dismissal time in order to keep safety a priority, we will notify you as soon as possible.

## Daily Operation Interruptions

- Utility issues (gas, electricity, water) are another factor that may cause a school to close. If a school site is impacted by a lack of water supply to a building and/or electricity to a building or neighborhood, a school may also be closed or delayed. This may impact the district or a specific school.

## DEFINITIONS

### Scheduled eLearning Day

- Students complete pre-determined work on their own at home without meeting with their teacher. This could be assigned in Google Classroom, ahead of time, in anticipation of known closures or other scheduled activities. These may be used for things like Parent/Teacher Conference days, or Election Day, when students are not present in the buildings but school is in session. These are limited to a maximum of three per year and appear on the approved school calendar. Scheduled eLearning day is also known as an Asynchronous learning day.

### Virtual Learning Day

- It will be utilized when the weather or other conditions are not suitable for the school to operate as normal. Students will work from home on these days and will have access to teachers. These are typically not scheduled ahead of time and may be used in the event of inclement weather, a building maintenance issue (broken water main), or a proactive shutdown to slow the spread of illness. **Virtual Learning Day is also known as Synchronous Learning Day.**
- Information on the [virtual learning schedule](#). Due to changes in law made in 2022, schools are not able to conduct more than three virtual instruction days unless students are engaged in 50% or more of teacher-directed synchronous instruction. Synchronous instruction is defined as delivered live and in real-time by a teacher. As a result, if virtual learning is scheduled during an inclement weather day, students will be expected to log into Google Classrooms and be actively engaged with their teachers during learning activities.

### 2 Hour Delay

- A two-hour delay means that the daily schedule will be pushed back by 2 hours. For those using school transportation, the buses will pick up your student approximately two hours later than on a normal day. The building schedules will be adjusted accordingly to accommodate classes. Each building will be a bit different, so if you have specific questions, please contact your building principal.
- A.M. Preschool classes do not meet on 2-hour delay days.
- If a two-hour delay occurs on a Wednesday, we will not have an early release on that Wednesday afternoon, and school will release at the regular time.

### Early Dismissal

- While not used often, on occasion, we may need to do an early dismissal. If we know we have hazardous weather arriving so that dismissal may be impacted or unsafe, or a maintenance/operational issue that requires us to evacuate a building, we will notify transportation and run routes. We will communicate the dismissal plan for car riders if and when this option is necessary.

### County Emergency

- Current weather conditions are, potentially, not suitable for travel. Please follow local authorities instructions.

**Health-related Closures**

- Information will be distributed via ParentSquare regarding the specifics of these closures. This could be a district-wide or building-level impact and will be communicated accordingly.

This information is being provided in advance so that you may arrange for childcare in advance of any weather-related school delay or closing. Changes in our normal routines are disruptive but the safety of our children and employees will remain our priority. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Dr. Teresa Brown, Superintendent