

Emergency Closing Information

With the weather turning colder, I'm sharing with you the general criteria that will be used in determining whether to cancel in-person instruction and close our school buildings due to inclement weather. If your family contact information has changed, It is imperative that you update your contact information in your Skyward Family Access Portal by following the directions below:

- **Please use the following directions to [Update Your Parent / Household Contact Information](#) in Skyward Family Access.** This is how we will contact you if there is an emergency situation or school closing. If you fail to update your contact information, you will not receive an automated message in the event of an emergency or school closing. If necessary, you may select more than one contact number and you may list your mobile number as the primary number if that's the best number to reach you.

We will always do our best to keep our schools open. Sometimes it is an easy, clear-cut decision but other times the forecasts are more variable and it becomes less obvious. The decision to stay open is based on the following factors:

- ❖ Visibility and street conditions in McHenry
- ❖ Functioning of our buses in conjunction with our feeder districts
- ❖ Operational status of our mechanical systems
- ❖ Overall conditions of both East and West parking lots and grounds
- ❖ Staffing

Excessive Snowfall

Excessive snowfall can make roads impassable and travel dangerous. When a large snowfall occurs (or is anticipated with a high degree of certainty) we consider closing schools since travel can be hazardous. Whenever possible we try to make this decision in advance (the night before, for example) so that families can make any necessary plans. However, this decision is often made early in the morning on the day of the snow event to see if streets or parking lots can be cleared overnight.

Extreme Cold

When the wind chill reaches approximately -30 degrees, we consider closing school since frostbite can occur within 10-30 minutes of exposure and outside conditions can be dangerous. Most often when the wind chill drops below -30 degrees a **Wind Chill Warning** is issued. **A Wind Chill Warning (below -30 degrees) is the general**

benchmark we use for closing school due to extreme temperatures. When the wind chill is predicted to reach or exceed -25 to -29 degrees, most likely a **Wind Chill Advisory or Watch** will be issued which should highlight the need for individuals to dress appropriately if they will be out in the elements for any extended period of time.

Emergency Closing

- On days of inclement weather, we will make the decision to cancel school before 5:30 a.m. The [District 156 website](#) will be updated immediately with school closure information. Subsequently, you will receive an email and automated phone message and/or text to the number(s) listed in your Skyward Family Access Portal. *Please do not call the Transportation Department to find out whether McHenry schools are closed due to weather.*
- The [District 156 Website](#) will continue to be updated throughout the day with additional information. The building principal - in conjunction with staff members and coaches - will decide whether scheduled after-school events or athletic practices/competitions will take place later in the day or evening.

Thank you for your time and attention. Please make sure you review your household contact information in your Skyward Family Account and update if necessary.

Take Good Care.