

Iroquois County CUSD 9

Weather Related Procedures

Heat Related Guidelines

The health and safety of students are of paramount importance to local school superintendents. Section 18-12, the School Code allows the use of interrupted School Days for “adverse weather conditions.” As a reminder, with regard to extreme heat, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) allows for five options:

1. Amend the school calendar to start school at a later date
2. Dismiss after 5-clock hours of instruction
 1. Instructional time is maximized
 2. Advance notice will be provided to allow parents to arrange for childcare
 3. School day does not have to be made up
3. Utilize an Emergency Day (no school for the entire district)
 1. Advance notice will be provided
 2. School day must be made up
4. Utilize an Interrupted Day (school may be dismissed after a minimum of one clock hour of instruction. An interrupted day is a day in which the district has provided at least 1 hour of instruction but must close prior to providing 5 hours instruction due to a condition beyond the control of the school district that poses a hazardous threat to the health and safety of the students. An example would be a gas leak or loss of plumbing)
5. Utilize an E-Learning/Remote Learning or possible Remote Planning day. This day would count as either an instructional day or planning day for teachers. It would not have to be made up.

Every attempt will be made to give advance notice to allow parents to arrange for childcare.

Criteria for Early Dismissal - Heat

The district refers to the NOAA National Weather Service’s Heat Index Chart, which provides information about the likelihood of heat disorders due to prolonged exposure to high temperatures and humidity. If the forecasts call for the outdoor heat index to be at the “danger” level or higher, this triggers a decision to either shorten the school day, or close school. When the outdoor heat index is at this level, our indoor classrooms generally have even higher heat indexes.

If the heat index (combination of heat + humidity) is 97 degrees or above

Communication of Early Dismissal

Parents, students, and staff will be notified no later than 10:00 a.m. in the event an early dismissal is necessary due to the heat index. Notification will be made via phone call system, email, and District Facebook and website pages.

The district is aware that it is difficult for families when changes are made to the school day on short notice. However, the health and safety of the children must come first.

Staff Members:

In the event school is dismissed early, staff members are expected to work a full contractual day, but are encouraged to locate a cool place within the building to work. Non-certified/hourly staff members may leave early, but will only be compensated for time worked. Hourly staff members may work a full day, but are also encouraged to locate a cool place within the building to work.

Building Plans for Heat

- Keep shades closed on the side of the building receiving the most sunlight.
- Keep overhead lights to a minimum if possible.
- Turn off any electronic equipment that is not in use.
- Rooms that have window air conditioning units can be kept on overnight on the low setting.
- Students will be allowed to bring water bottles to remain properly hydrated throughout the day.

Winter Weather Guidelines

There are several relevant factors to consider regarding winter weather and the decision to open or close schools, such as:

1. Weather service information
2. Temperature and wind chill
3. Amount of snow and ice accumulated
4. Whether snow/ice is continuing
5. Building and bus fleet conditions
6. Parking lot and sidewalk conditions
7. Discussion with village officials about snow removal status for roads
8. Discussion with other school districts in the area

Criteria for School Closing - Cold

Unit 9 refers to the NOAA National Weather Service's Wind Chill Chart, which provides information about the likelihood of frostbite due to prolonged exposure.

Wind Chill	0 to -19	School Open
Wind Chill	-20 to -29	School may be open
Wind Chill	-30 and below	School will close

Criteria for School Closing - Snow and Ice

Unit 9 refers to local weather forecasts which provide information on projected snow &/or ice accumulations. The district will take into consideration projected amounts of snow &/or ice accumulations, especially during travel times to and from school; along with reviewing if the streets are clear enough for bus travel and if driving conditions are hazardous.

Communication of School Closing or Early Dismissal

The district is aware that it is difficult for families when changes are made to the school day on short notice. However, the health and safety of the children must come first.

Unit 9 will make every effort to make a decision and announce a weather related dismissal the night before; however, parents, students and staff will be notified as soon as possible in the event an early dismissal is necessary due to the wind chill, or for unpredicted snow and ice accumulations. Notification will be made via phone call system, email, District Facebook/website pages and local radio stations.

Parents and guardians reserve the right to keep their children home from school for safety reasons. Absences from school due to inclement weather will be recorded as an excused absence on the student's record as long as it is reported per school procedures.

Athletics/Extracurricular Activities

If school is not in session, all athletic and extracurricular activities/events, including practices, may be cancelled. The only exception involves clubs and teams participating in post-season events. This decision will be made by conferences or IESA/IHSA officials. During remote or e-learning days, decisions will be made as they develop. While we are in session on these identified days, Unit 9 will keep the safety of our students at the forefront in making these decisions.

Staff Members

In the event school is dismissed early due to the wind chill or snow/ice accumulation, all staff members will be released per the superintendent's discretion. Remote learning or e-learning days will take into account opening buildings for staff to be able to come in to work as an option if possible.

Guidelines for Outdoor Recess

The district has a general guideline that students will go outside if the temperature “feels like” 20 degrees or higher. However, we also take into account (wind chill, frostbite index, sunshine) in making the daily determination. If the sun is shining and the wind speed is low, we may send students out when the air temperature is slightly below 20 degrees. We also have the option of shortening the time students spend outside if needed. During winter months, always have your children dress for outdoor weather.

