

Information on Inclement Weather

Part of my responsibilities as school superintendent includes making the decision to delay or cancel school. This is never easy as I consider the impact of these decisions for many of our families, especially those with young children who need childcare provisions. Many of our parents have reliable contingency plans, including the use of extended family and siblings; others utilize older students in their neighborhoods. Some, however, have no one to help with their young children, and consequently lose compensation for lost work opportunities. Inevitably, many are inconvenienced with school delays and cancellations, which I sincerely regret. Ultimately, however, we place the safety of our students as the primary reason to delay or cancel school.

When severe weather strikes, John Neideffer, Director of Transportation for Loogootee Schools, and I are out checking on road conditions as early as 4:45 am. Should we determine that road conditions merit a delay or cancellation, I need to notify our school bus drivers by 6:15 am. Any later than 6:15 am and we run the risk of missing a driver before they leave home.

Generally, there are three types of changes to the school schedule we use: a two (2) hour delay in the morning; a two (2) hour early dismissal in the afternoon or a school closure. All three (3) types of change to our school schedule are dictated by current weather conditions.

Unfortunately, there may be times we call a two (2) hour delay and the weather changes for the worse. In those rare times, we would need to inform our bus drivers by 8:15 am of the decision to close schools for the day. Again, these decisions are based upon weather conditions and safety for all involved.

It is crucial for parents to understand that there will be days we will have school when conditions are not perfect. A major part of the decision making process is whether or not our buses can run their routes. As your Superintendent and as a father, I understand your concerns of having a teenager drive during inclement weather. In fact, I worry about my teenager driving in perfect conditions.

LCSC recognizes that it is first and foremost a parental decision as to whether or not a child should attend school on inclement weather days. LCSC respects the parent's determination regarding his/her child's attendance at school during inclement weather. If school is open, or delayed, because of inclement weather, the school will respect the parent's decision to keep their child at home. Parents are expected to contact the school and inform school officials of their determination, and the student will be counted as absent, per Indiana code. Students who are absent due to inclement weather will be given the opportunity to complete their academic work in the same manner as an excused absence from school.

We will send out an "all-call" phone message when we have a delay or cancellation. In addition, the media is another source for Loogootee Community School Corporation (LCSC) weather information. TV channels 2 and 10 carry LCSC information. The information also appears on these stations' websites under closing/delays. We also contact local radio stations such as WRZR, WWBL, WAMW and WITZ. I hope this information is helpful.

Respectfully,

Chip Mehaffey, Superintendent