



FAQs: School Closures Due to Winter Weather

What weather factors might cause school to be closed?

Snow

A significant snowfall where the plows have a difficult time keeping up with the snow may cause school to be cancelled. This could occur either due to a rapid rate of snowfall or extensive blowing and drifting snow. In most cases it is the timing of a snowfall that has a larger bearing on school than the amount of snowfall. For example, a significant snowfall in the evening that stops overnight will likely not cause school to be closed as the plows will have been able to clear roads. However, a rapid, heavy snowfall in the morning hours may have an impact on closing school.

Ice

While often much less predictable than snow, an ice storm can be just as dangerous as a significant snowfall.

Cold temperatures

As we live in Northern Illinois, there are going to be many days when it is extremely cold that we will go to school. However, when predicted wind chill is -30 or lower we will begin to examine closing school. The main concern is the operation of buses and kids standing at bus stops. There is no magic temperature number, but we look at all of the factors of actual temperature, wind chill, and the timing and duration of the low temperatures. On days when it is extremely cold but we do have school, we do have several chase buses at various points throughout the district. They are able to quickly respond to a bus if it breaks down so kids don't have to sit on a cold bus or be delayed at bus stops.

If in doubt, why doesn't the District always just close?

The weather situation really needs to warrant a closure. We live in Northern Illinois, and if we closed every time there is snow on the streets or it is cold, we would have many, many snow days each year. Also, closing school has a significant impact on families. Many parents have to make last-minute arrangements for childcare for their children. We do not want families to have to do this unless absolutely necessary.

When is the decision to close made?

We will rarely close school based only on a forecast. There have been too many instances in the past where severe inclement weather fails to materialize as predicted. In most cases with snow, we cannot make the decision until the morning. We do try to do it before 5:00 a.m. whenever possible. If it is a temperature related decision, it could potentially be made the evening before.

Does the District ever let school out early due to a weather event?

We do not want to ever say *never*, but this would only happen the direst of circumstances. First, when school is dismissed early, there is always concern that some parents may not receive the information or be able to make immediate arrangements for their children. We would not want to drop off a young child to an empty house. Second, many of our buses run routes throughout the day. Thus, they are not all available should we have to dismiss early.

Are after-school and extracurricular activities cancelled if school is cancelled?

Yes, in the event of a school closure, all school activities scheduled for that day also are cancelled.

How are parents notified if school is closed?

School closing information is provided through the SwiftReach SwiftK12 (formerly Alert Solutions) Notification System.

You may view/update your contact information and contact preferences from within the PowerSchool Parent Portal by clicking “SwiftReach SwiftK12” under “Alerting” on the left.

[Click here for directions on updating SwiftReach SwiftK12 contact information and preferences.](#)

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the D158 administrative office at (847) 659-6158.

Closing information is also posted to the District 158 website at www.district158.org and is available through the following media:

Radio

WGN – 720 AM

WBBM – 780 AM

WZSR – STAR 105.5 FM

TV

CBS-TV – Chicago 2

NBC-TV – Chicago 5

ABC-TV – Chicago 7

WGN-TV – Chicago 9

FOX-TV – Chicago 32