

BASD Guidelines for cancellation, early dismissal, or delayed start of the school day

Inclement or Extreme Weather Information

One of the most challenging responsibilities for the District is to make decisions about school delays, early dismissals, and school closings. The District understands the difficulty a change in the hours of the school day may place upon parents and/or guardians with regard to child care, parent employment flexibility, and at times transportation. The District's primary responsibility is to keep our students safe from the risks of extreme or inclement weather.

Often weather can be unpredictable. District personnel utilize local radio and television stations as well as various computer models and reports to learn about anticipated weather conditions. Once we recognize a potential hazard or receive a report or weather alert, a decision is made based upon the timing of the weather event and the degree of the potential risk.

In most cases, the weather event will affect the entire district and all schools will follow the established delay or dismissal procedures. There may be rare instances, as with extreme temperatures, that an individual school may experience an early dismissal.

In most instances a single decision early in the morning to cancel or delay the start of school will be made and that will be the final decision. There may be rare cases where a delay is implemented and then due to weather conditions growing more hazardous or not improving as rapidly as anticipated, the decision may be made to cancel school.

In all cases when a decision to alter the school hours due to weather conditions or other building emergencies is made, parents/guardians will be notified the district website, and the district's emergency notification system. It is critical that your contact information be kept current for our emergency notification system to be effective. If your contact information changes, please make sure you notify your school with the updated information.

Please remember that it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for the care of their children in the event that school is closed, delayed, or dismissed early for weather or any other potential emergency situation.

The following guidelines have been established to assure your child's safety when weather conditions warrant:

Bellefonte schools will not open when travel is too difficult to ensure the safety of students. If bad weather forces the closing of schools, the District will utilize an emergency notification system to alert parents, faculty, and staff of a delay or cancellation as soon as possible after the decision is made. This will generally occur between approximately 5:00 AM and 6:00 AM. The information will also be posted on the district's web site at www.basd.net. Early closings and activity cancellations, due to adverse weather conditions or other emergencies, will be communicated in the same manner.

If an emergency or extreme temperature conditions force the closing of a school(s) , parents will be notified through our website and the district's emergency alert system. It is imperative that parents make arrangements for emergency child care and/or arrange to have someone at the bus stop to meet their child or children (especially Kindergarten and younger students).

A general guideline for gauging early dismissal for extreme heat is a heat index of 93-95 degrees as determined by the air temperature (Fahrenheit) and the percent of relative humidity. For example, an air temperature inside the classrooms of 90 degrees at 50% humidity could trigger a potential early dismissal. The air temperature would be determined by the principal or designee based upon the use of a district thermal measurement sensor. Should only a few classrooms be affected, students would be relocated to a cooler room for continued instruction. In cases of higher temperature days, 80 degrees Fahrenheit or above, students are encouraged to wear light clothing and remain hydrated by drinking water frequently; only light activity is recommended.

A general guideline for altering the school day due to extreme cold is a wind-chill factor of negative 20 degrees Fahrenheit. For example, an air temperature of -10 degrees Fahrenheit with a wind speed of 5 miles an hour could trigger a potential delayed start or closing.

Bus transportation may be canceled or delayed depending upon weather conditions. Students using Bellefonte transportation and attending a nonpublic school will:

- Follow the instructions for Bellefonte Area School District as announced on the District web site.
- If a non-public school is open and Bellefonte Area School District is closed due to inclement weather, there will be NO TRANSPORTATION.
- If Bellefonte Area School District is experiencing a weather delay, all nonpublic bus transportation will also be delayed.
- Parents should arrange to have someone at the bus stop to meet their child or children (especially Kindergarten and younger students).
- If an early dismissal is due to inclement weather, expect delays. Driving conditions may be less than ideal.

Understanding the Weather (National Weather Service):

Wind-Chill (the cooling effect of wind on exposed skin due to air temperature combined with wind speed):

- 30° is chilly and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is cold
- 0° to 15° is very cold

- -20° to 0° is bitter cold with significant risk of frostbite to exposed skin
- Exposure below -20° frostbite is likely

Heat Index (what the temperature feels like to the human body when relative humidity is combined with the air temperature):

- 80° or below is considered comfortable
- At 90° beginning to feel uncomfortable
- 100° uncomfortable and may be hazardous