

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION



Maureen Sabolinski
Superintendent of Schools, Franklin

WHO IS WATCHING THE WEATHER?

The Superintendent, school administrators and public safety personnel, carefully monitor the weather conditions during the snow season.



WHERE DO THEY GET THEIR INFORMATION?

School district staff monitor state and local weather forecasts. The Town Department of Public Works and Police Department officials test the road conditions and report that information to facilities staff. We must give careful consideration to the most dangerous bus routes in the district. So, even if it looks clear on your street, dangerous conditions may exist in other parts of town or on highways.

WHAT FACTORS ARE CONSIDERED WHEN MAKING THE DECISION TO CLOSE SCHOOL?

The safety of all district children is our primary concern in making our decision. In deciding whether children will be safe, we look at the following factors:

- Information on road conditions from the town's superintendent of roads and from the police
- Time snow starts to accumulate, and the amount of snow expected
- Weather predictions as to what is expected later in the day
- Building conditions (e.g. whether we have power and heat)
- Parking lot conditions
- Temperature and wind-chill
- The Department of Public Works prediction as to when roads, walkways and parking lots will be cleared



WHO MAKES THE DECISION?

The Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with DPW, the Highway Department, police and the facilities director will make the decision.



WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE?

The Superintendent must make the decision at the earliest possible time so that radio and TV stations can be notified. Many times the most important information is given at the 5:00 am newscasts since conditions could have changed overnight. The Superintendent will start the notification process of parents and staff as soon as possible with a target time of 5:00 am.

HOW IS THE PUBLIC NOTIFIED?

This year we are adding the Connect Ed capability to our inclement weather notification process. Parents and school district staff will receive messages via phones and/or email about the status of school opening/closing during inclement weather situations. In addition, we will still broadcast information through the traditional TV and radio stations. Tune to the following stations for up-to-date information on school closings. Do not call the school unless it is an emergency.

Television: Channels 4 (WBZ), 5 (WCVB), 7 (WHDH) Fox 25 and 10 (WJAR NBC)-R/
Radio: WBZ (1030 AM), WMRC (1490 AM) and WGBH
Connect Ed: Please keep your contact information current at the schools.





WHAT IS THE PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY?

The safety of your child is first and foremost! The Franklin Public Schools cover a large amount of geography with terrain variations. Conditions can change suddenly. **On days when the weather is questionable but the schools are open, please feel free to exercise your parental discretion to keep your child home. Teachers will be flexible in accepting late work under such conditions.**



WHAT ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE SIDEWALKS?

During and after any snowstorm, clearing the roads and parking lots are the town's first priority. Second in priority is the clearing of the sidewalks. Ideally, both roads and sidewalks will be sufficiently clear of snow before we will open. However, please be aware that schools may be open before sidewalks are clear. There may, however, be some days when sidewalks will have snow cover that students will have to walk through on their way to school. Sidewalk maintenance is the responsibility of the DPW and due to the large number of sidewalks; it may take up to a week to clear them. Parents must exercise their discretion on how students will arrive/depart from school.



THE CANCELLATION DILEMMA

The decision to hold or cancel school on a day of inclement weather is always a difficult one. When we cancel school on a winter snow day, it means our students rejoice but parents may have childcare issues and ultimately, I have to add another day of school onto our June calendar. If we hold school on a difficult weather day, that may cause some students to miss school or to slip on snow and ice and get hurt on their way to or from school.

Weather prediction is an uncertain science when you live in New England. However, getting snow in winter is almost guaranteed. Since we will let the safety of our children guide my decision-making with regard to snow days, we ask all parents to make emergency alternative childcare arrangements should the day come when the children have no school and parents or guardians must report to work.



MAKE-UP DAYS

As per school attendance regulations, students must attend school for a minimum of 180 days. As snow days must be made up, we will use June 21-30 as designated make-up days. If snow days exceed these 8 days, we will adjust the school calendar to use school vacation time to make up days.

Thank you for planning in advance.



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