



Oradell Public School District

Our children, our hope, our future

December 14, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The winter weather season has arrived which, in NJ, means difficult and challenging road conditions for the next few months. The decision to delay, open or close schools when bad weather strikes is a difficult one that must take many factors into account. While we believe continuity in attendance best serves our students, the guiding principle during weather events is always student safety. The following summary is designed to shed light on how weather-closing decisions are made.

What factors are considered when making snow-closing decisions?

- **Weather Conditions and Forecasts** - We receive information regarding weather conditions from the Bergen County Office of Emergency Management, District Building and Grounds personnel, and from Internet-based weather services that provide targeted data specific to our local area. Of course, no forecast is ever perfect because weather is dynamic. Subtle changes in the temperature at 4:00 am can result in dramatic changes in road conditions by 8:00 am. To this end, we work hard to gather the best available and most accurate information possible.
- **Road Conditions throughout the Region** – The 70+ school districts of Bergen County are divided into several regions. Oradell is a member of the 15-district Region Five, which make closure decisions jointly because we are a part of a number of shared service agreements. Region Five covers over 30 square miles, and weather conditions vary somewhat from one area of our Region to another. The more well traveled main roads in one area or neighborhood may be clear, while more rural, less-traveled roads may be snow covered or slick with ice. When making weather closure decisions, *the conditions of roads and sidewalks that will affect the safety of students in all areas of both the District and the Region must be considered.*
- **School Building and Parking Lot Conditions** – Snow and ice must be removed from parking lots and sidewalks to ensure the safety of students, staff, and visitors.
- **Availability of Staff** - Many members of our staff travel long distances and may be unable to get to school given weather conditions on highways.

When is the decision made to close or delay school?

- Generally, the decision to close or delay the opening of school is made between 4:30 and 5:30 AM so that proper communication can take place.

(Continued)

How and when are parents notified of school closing decisions?

In most cases a RealTime Instant Alert notification (e-mail, voice, and/or text) will be sent between 5:00 – 6:00 AM when the decision to delay opening or to close school is made. *Parents are encouraged to review their contact information and notification preferences in their Parent Portal.* Instructions on how to do so may be found on the Oradell School website (www.oradellschool.org). Additionally, closing information will be posted on the Oradell School District website and will be shared on News12NJ.

How are school hours adjusted if there is a delayed opening or early dismissal?

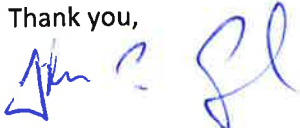
When there is a delayed opening, the school will open 90 minutes later than usual (Note: If there is a delayed opening on a Wednesday, then dismissal will be at 3:00). In addition, there is no Title I Program when there is a delayed opening. If there is an early dismissal, we will dismiss at 12:30 PM.

What if weather conditions shift suddenly and worsen?

We are aware that reversing a decision can cause significant disruptions within a household and the community. However, weather is dynamic and, therefore, our school closing decisions may need to change to ensure everyone's safety. For example, a few degrees difference in temperature may turn rain into ice. Moreover, a storm may stall or move faster than originally forecast which can produce significantly more snow on the roads than anticipated at 4:30 AM. In these instances, it is possible a delayed-opening may turn into a school closing. We will try to notify the public by 7:15 AM if this occurs. Additionally, if we decide on an early dismissal we will notify the public by 10:15 AM for a midday closing.

When it comes to weather issues there are often no perfect solutions. If you do not feel as though it is safe for your child to attend school then use your best judgment. In the end, please know our district staff continues to diligently work in a comprehensive manner so that we can make the best decision for our community.

Thank you,



John C. Anzul, Ed.D.
Superintendent