

The Metropolitan School District of Wayne Township

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Education Center

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Jeffrey K. Butts, Ph.D.

Superintendent of Schools

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Dear M.S.D. of Wayne Township Parent/Guardian

As we all know, Indiana weather can be very unpredictable. During the past several years, we have seen an increase in inclement weather. If that holds true again this year, you will be hearing from me often and may even wonder a time or two how I make the decision to delay or cancel school. It is rarely an easy decision and one that I make with a great deal of thought.

Attached to this letter are two documents that I hope you will review and keep close during these upcoming months. You can also get the most up-to-date information on Twitter @WayneTwpSuper, [Facebook](#), [M.S.D. of Wayne website](#), or any of our local media outlets. Decisions are made as early as possible and always before 6:00 a.m.

With the modifications to our transportation routes and bus stops, it will be very important to make sure our children have warm coats, gloves, hats, and scarves as they walk to and from the bus stop and while they wait for their bus. If you have not accessed the [Here Comes the Bus](#) program to get real time updates on your child's bus, please take a few minutes to do so before we face weather delays. Inclement weather will most assuredly result in our buses being delayed by drivers navigating wet, snowy, slushy, or icy roadways. If you have sidewalks in your neighborhood, please encourage your neighbors to keep their walks cleared of snow and ice during these winter months. In addition, please remind your children that while they may see vehicles approaching, the drivers may not see them. Being aware of their surroundings is even more important when the weather is poor.

Finally, we would like to have your children in school every day that we are in session. However, we will always respect your decision as a parent when it comes to the safety of your child(ren). Together, we will continue to provide great opportunities for our children and prepare them for their future successes.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey K. Butts, Ph.D.
Superintendent



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Metropolitan School District of Wayne Township Inclement Weather and School

Beliefs

- Parents have a child specific perspective regarding their child and the threat of inclement weather.
- A parent may make a determination for their child, and should respect the perspective of another parent regarding their child.
- The M.S.D. of Wayne Township respects a parent's determination regarding their 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. The student will be counted as absent, per state code, and students will be given an opportunity to complete their academic work in the same manner as an excused absence from school.
- The M.S.D. of Wayne Township believes the public expects schools to be open and to provide education, supervision, and other services (including meals) to its students.
- The M.S.D. of Wayne Township believes all parents are committed to keeping children safe and these parents will dress their children appropriately for the weather when sending the children to school.
- Variable weather conditions are to be expected in Central Indiana. The M.S.D. of Wayne Township believes parents have plans in place for weather related delays and closures and believe morning notification is generally appropriate.

The M.S.D. of Wayne Township Delaying or Closing School is Based on Multiple Variables

Freezing Rain/Sleet

- The most unpredictable weather variable is freezing rain/sleet. Freezing rain/sleet is temperature sensitive and fast-occurring. It begins and ends with little notice. When freezing rain/sleet are predicted, the decision regarding school is delayed until the latest possible time in an effort to observe the most current and local conditions. Such a decision will generally be made in the morning.

Snowfall

- Snowfall is more predictable than freezing rain/sleet. Meteorologists generally give a 2 inch variable when predicting snow accumulation. Because the variation in actual snowfall, when compared to predicted snowfall, the decision regarding school status is delayed until the snow accumulation indicates a need for action. Such a decision, except in extreme situations, will generally be made in the morning.

Extreme Snowfall Situations

- When snow has accumulated to a significant level, or is at such a level with more snowfall predicted, then the decision regarding school may be made the previous evening. A significant level is one in which local authorities have indicated it is unlikely streets will be passable by the following morning. This is an unlikely, but possible occurrence.

Extreme Cold

- Temperature prediction is increasingly accurate. The M.S.D. of Wayne Township uses the hourly temperature predictions for its zip code from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (noaa.gov). If air temperature is predicted by NOAA to be -10 degrees or below (the starting point for wind chill concerns with calm wind) at 7:00 a.m. the school will consider a two hour delay for the start of school. If the air temperature is predicted to remain at -10 degrees or below at 9:00 a.m. the school will consider closing. Such a determination will be made as early as possible, perhaps the evening before, but certainly by 6:00 a.m. in the morning.

Extreme Wind Chill

- Wind chill prediction is not as accurate as temperature prediction because wind speed is more variable by time and location. While NOAA observations and predictions are based upon the open conditions of the

Indianapolis Airport, these conditions are often different throughout Marion County. Local observations of wind speed will affect the decision regarding delaying or closing school. Wind chill concerns emerge at a predicted wind chill temperature of -19 degrees. If wind chill is predicted by NOAA to be -19 degrees or below and local wind conditions are predicted to mirror the airport wind conditions at 7:00 a.m., the school will consider a two hour delay for the start of school. If the wind chill is predicted to remain at -19 degrees or below and local conditions mirror the airport wind conditions at 9:00 a.m., the school will consider closing. The variability of wind speed will likely cause this decision to be made in the morning.

Functional Facilities

- Utility issues (gas, electricity, water) may cause a school to close. Issues associated with cold, including water supply to a building and electricity to a building or neighborhood, may cause school to be cancelled.