

Northshore School District

2008-2009 Snow/Ice/Emergency Bulletin



Emergencies such as snow, ice, thawing roads, power outages, and other weather-related problems can alter school schedules and affect bus transportation for students, whether the situation involves a late-morning start or an early dismissal. Early dismissals due to power outages, snow, etc. will occur only if delay in dismissal significantly increases hazards. In the event an early dismissal is required, it is important that you have a plan for your child(ren).

Most radio stations, particularly those listed below, and television stations broadcast information regarding operation of Northshore Schools during inclement weather because all school districts participate in a computerized notification system. Since conditions vary from one school district to another, it is very important to listen for mention of **Northshore School District #417**. Television and radio stations provide school information on a continuing basis from beginning at about 6 a.m. if conditions deteriorate.

Why Wait to Find Out?

Want the easiest and quickest way to find out if school will be delayed or closed? Try one of the following options after 5 AM:

- www.nsd.org. The most up-to-date information is posted here and updated as conditions change.
- Call Northshore's District Information Line at (425) 408-6001.
- Call your school's main number and when the voice mail answers, press "9".
- Surf over to www.schoolreport.org, the Public Schools Emergency Communications System website, and click on "Northshore SD".

AM Stations	KCIS 630	KIRO 710	KIXI 880	KOMO 1000	KRKO 1380			
FM Stations	KPLU 88.5	KSER 90.7	KUBE 93.3	KMPS 94.1	KIRO 97.3	KMTT 103.7	KCMS 105.3	KRWM 106.9

If Northshore #417 is not mentioned during the newscast, it means the schools are open, with buses operating as normally as possible. Please do not call schools or radio stations.

If Northshore is mentioned during the newscast, one of the following situations will be announced:

1. "Northshore junior and senior high schools will open one hour late, and elementary schools will open one and one-half hours late." This means secondary school buses will start their routes one hour late, using the margin of time to chain up if necessary, complete their secondary runs, and begin the elementary school runs. Elementary buses should arrive at bus stops about 90 minutes later than normal. When schools open late, there will be no Head Start, elementary band or orchestra, zero-period classes, preschool classes (AM & PM), prekindergarten classes (AM & PM), morning kindergarten or out-of-district programs. All-day and extended day kindergarten classes will run on the elementary schedule. Afternoon kindergarten will run on its regular schedule.

OR

2. "All Northshore schools are closed." This means no classes in the Northshore School District will be in session for that day. There will be no after-school activities, including athletic events, and no Head Start classes, elementary band or elementary orchestra. A make-up day will be scheduled.

OR

3. "Northshore schools will open on time, but buses will operate on Limited Routes." This means buses will operate on major arterials which have been cleared or plowed. Send your children to areas previously designated by the bus drivers for limited pick-up. Drivers instruct students early in the school year about these pick-up locations. If it is apparent that buses cannot travel the normal routes through your area, even though no announcement has been made, send your children to the limited-route, pick-up site. See reverse side of this bulletin for Snow Routes.

OR

4. "All Northshore schools are open, but there is no bus transportation." This means classes will be in session, but there will be no bus service available that day. Students must rely on private vehicles. This happens when a prolonged freeze is followed by a quick thaw. In rare instances, the county may then close soft roads to heavy vehicles.

Schools and the Weather

Weather conditions may affect bus routes in the district. To determine if your route might be affected, please consult the 2008-09 Snow/Ice/Emergency bulletin, mailed to your home by the Transportation Department in October, or go to Northshore's website, www.nsd.org. Schools and the Weather information can be found on the site by clicking any of the the following links:

- District Information
- Elementary Education
- Secondary Education

A list of alternate bus routes is among the information provided. More information can be obtained from the Transportation Department, (425) 408-7900.

If weather affects the start of the school day, schedule changes and the status of before and/or after school programs and community events will be posted at the top of the home page of our website. Northshore policy states that any time schools are closed, there will be no after-school activities, including athletic events. If the start of the school day is delayed, the status of after-school activities, including athletic events, will be evaluated during the day and posted at the top of the home page.

If no schedule change information is posted, schools and buses are on their regular schedules.

Make-Up Days

Northshore has changed the process for adding days to the calendar when schools are closed due to weather. In the past, the days were automatically added to the end of the school year. For 2008-09, the following non-student days will become school days.

- School closure prior to December 22, 2008: Non-student day on January 5, 2009 becomes a school day.
- School closures between January 5 and March 31, 2009: Non-student days of April 3 and May 26 become school days.

In the event there are more than three emergency closure days, further modifications to the calendar will be negotiated.

Decision Process for Weather-Related Closures

Northshore staff follow a very complex process - one not undertaken lightly but always with the utmost concern for the safety of our staff and students.

1. NOAA weather forecasts are monitored the day before a storm is predicted and during the early morning hours.
2. Winter Watch Committee is notified of the possibility of weather issues and prepares for road evaluations.
3. Dispatcher is notified at 3 a.m. by district staff who work the graveyard shift if weather affects road conditions.
4. Dispatcher notifies Winter Watch Committee members at 3 a.m. to begin road evaluations and report by 4:15 a.m.
5. Winter Watch Committee members drive around five sectors of the district checking on road and traffic conditions (downed tree limbs, electrical lines, or road hazards), walking conditions, driveway and parking lot conditions and whether buildings are functional (electricity, etc.):

The five sectors are:

Arrowhead - Inglemoor - Norway Hill - Westhill
Kenmore - Frank Love - Shelton View
Fernwood - Turner's Corner - Kokanee - Woodin

Leota - Hollywood Hill - English Hill
Timbercrest - Dump Road - Mink Road

6. Committee members rate 8-12 key areas of their routes on a four-point scale:
1 - normal
2 - minimal hazards present
3 - moderate (difficult to negotiate)
4 - severe (very hazardous)
7. At 4:15 a.m. a recommendation about school operations is made based on the weather forecast, current weather conditions, input from neighboring districts, and safe-driving conditions
8. At 4:45 a.m. the Executive Director of Support Services is notified for a final decision. The Executive Director consults with the Superintendent to inform his decision.

Other considerations

- The ability of staff to get to school safely and on time.
- Providing a consistent message for working parents who leave home before their children leave for school.
- The weather forecast for later in the day.