



MEQUON-THIENSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

CITY OF MEQUON AND VILLAGE OF THIENSVILLE

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Demond A. Means, Ed.D., Superintendent

Eric J. Dimmitt, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

Hughes B. George, Director of Pupil Services

Gail M. Grieger, Director of Business Services

January 12, 2012

Dear Parents and Guardians:

It is my sincere hope that everyone enjoyed the winter break and is ready for a successful conclusion to the first semester of the school year. As you might imagine, the months of January, February, and March are always challenging for school superintendents in Wisconsin due to the harsh winter, and the decision to cancel school as a result of inclement weather. The one thing we can all be guaranteed of in Wisconsin is that we will face bitter winter weather in the upcoming months, and so the purpose of this communication is to share with you the process that is used to reach a school closure decision.

When determining whether a snowstorm closure is necessary, we monitor the estimated snow accumulation and the timing of the storm through the National Weather Service. If we are considering closing school due to bitter cold and wind chill, we will do so if the National Weather Service changes a wind chill advisory to a wind chill warning.

Next, the North Shore school superintendents conduct a 4:30 a.m. conversation to compare information gained through contacts in the individual school districts. The following information is considered in all decisions related to closing school because of winter weather:

1. Information from the City of Mequon Department of Public Works officials, focusing on road conditions along with both the short- and long-term weather forecasts.
2. Information from our bus transportation company regarding its recommendations. Will buses running routes at a slower pace impact the length of time students may be waiting at bus stops?
3. A conversation with our Director of Buildings and Grounds to make certain the parking lots can be plowed in a timely fashion for safety.
4. Determining if it is safe for staff and parents to drive in the conditions. Is it safe for high school-age students with little driving experience to drive to school?
5. The timing of the snowfall. Will the timing interfere with the start or dismissal of school?

If it is decided that school should be closed, the District will use the AlertNow communication system to contact families. In addition, the District will post the school closure information on its website and notify all of the local television and radio stations.

If you believe your child would be safer at home in poor weather conditions, he or she will be marked as excused as long as the school receives a phone call from the parent/guardian citing “inclement weather conditions.” Likewise, if you become uncomfortable with the weather conditions throughout the day during a *poor weather day*, we would encourage you to use your best judgment, communicate with your school’s principal, and make the necessary arrangements to pick up your child.

I would like to reiterate that what might appear to be a simple decision involves the consideration of many different factors, and the decision to cancel school is only reached after seeking the counsel of many sources. Please be assured that my first priority is to ensure the safety of our students, parents, and staff.

Thank you for your attention to this communication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Demond A. Means". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Demond A. Means, Ed.D.
Superintendent