

Media Release - Inclement Weather February 2023

Dear Community,

Up here in the Northwoods, winter weather is a given that we expect and prepare for. In the Mellen School District we design the School Calendar with this in mind so we have the flexibility needed to make decisions to keep our students and staff safe.

The decision to close school affects our entire community, and for that reason we are thoughtful and deliberate in our decision-making process. We realize, at times, our decisions may not fit with your individual circumstances. Therefore, we encourage and strongly support you in making the decision that is best for your child(ren).

We consider the combined effects of snow, ice, and wind chill when determining if school will be held. When the National Weather Service predicts a "Winter Storm (Blizzard) Warning" for the Mellen area, school will likely close depending on the time of day and length of the storm. If the National Weather Service predicts sustained wind chills of -40°F or below, or if the actual temperature is -25°F or below, in the Mellen area, school will close.

We also consult with the Ashland County Highway Department, Township Supervisors, the Bus Drivers, the Custodians, and neighboring Superintendents in making the decision. We generally make the decision whether or not to close school by 5:30am, sometimes even the night before. This information is communicated to parents via our Autodialer, the District FB page, and local TV and radio stations.

A late start can be used, but oftentimes is much more difficult for families to manage. In the event of a late start, buses will pick up students 2 hours later than usual.

An early release is also an option, but again, is difficult for families to manage. In the event of an early release, the decision is generally made by 11am for a release time of 1pm. Time is needed to notify parents to make arrangements for child care and to contact the bus drivers.

If school is canceled, all school events, including games and practices are canceled for the day and into the evening.

We appreciate your understanding of the difficulties in making this decision, and your support in getting our children to school safely on winter days. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (715) 274-3601.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Elmhurst-Friemoth
Superintendent
Mellen School District