

How the C-PP District Makes Weather-Related School Closing Decisions

Q. Who makes the decision to close schools or call a two-hour delay?

A. The Transportation Director provides the Superintendent of Schools with input. The decision to close the schools or call a two hour delay due to inclement weather is then made by the Superintendent of Schools.

Q. What steps do you use to arrive at a decision?

A. This is a lengthy and detailed process. It usually starts 24 hours in advance when the District is alerted to potential weather problems by the "Accu-Weather" weather service. The service provides information frequently, keeping the District apprised of changes in the forecast. This information is updated as the forecast changes and the District is provided with the most current information. We also utilize the National Weather Service in Binghamton as well as several other weather information tools. Generally, the Transportation Director and the Superintendent of Schools discuss the possibility of needing to close school the night before, depending on the forecast.

Q. What time do you make a decision?

A. The morning of school, the Transportation Director starts the process at 3:30 a.m. by driving on several rural roads before proceeding to the District's Transportation Garage in East Corning. Upon arrival, he receives the most current information from "Accu-Weather" and then calls various surrounding school districts to gather information about their road conditions. Several other calls may be made to local bus contractors and various other agencies located within the District to include but not limited to police agencies and town and county garages to ascertain conditions. Between 4:45 a.m. and 5:15 a.m. a call is placed to the Superintendent of Schools and weather conditions are discussed and recommendations are made.

Q. What happens if you decide to close school or have a two-hour delay?

A. If the decision is made to close school or call a two hour delay, the Transportation Director calls local bus contractors, several school districts in surrounding areas, various other agencies and other personnel who need early notification. Calls are also placed to radio and TV stations from the Corning-Painted Post area to Rochester and Binghamton. All stations have code words to identify that the right person is calling. Our Public Information Coordinator will also notify families through Facebook, Twitter, and the District Website.

Q. Why does it seem we are the last District to declare a snow day or two-hour delay?

A. Sometimes reaching the radio and TV stations is difficult, as many other districts, various other agencies, and parents are calling in, creating a high volume of phone calls. Most calling is usually accomplished before 5:30 a.m. The local stations are the first to be called. We always try to make a decision well before 5:30 a.m. as the first buses are leaving the garage between 5:30 a.m. and 5:45 a.m.

Q. Should more snow days be set aside by the district?

A. The number of snow days set aside is only for planning purposes. At no time will the fact that the District has or does not have snow days affect the closing of school. The key fact to keep in mind is . . . can buses travel the roads? Buses are more than capable of dealing with several inches of snow safely because of their weight, as well as the capability of the bus drivers. If the District needs more snow days, arrangements will be made to make up days.

As of December 15, the District has four snow days for the 2016-2017 school year.

Q. How cold does it have to get to close or delay school?

A. The general rule of thumb is -20 degrees including the wind chill temperature. We have a number of students who walk to school or wait at bus stops and we have to take into consideration that frostbite can occur on exposed skin in about 30 minutes at wind chills of -20 or lower. We also review the forecast for later in the morning to determine whether or not we should call a two hour delay or close school for the day.

Q. What is the most challenging aspect of closing or delaying school in Corning-Painted Post?

A. It is truly a multi-faceted problem. First, our District is 238 square miles, with many of our students living in rural areas. Often times the weather is different in the various communities that make up the District so decisions can be determined based on the conditions of rural roads. Just because it appears okay in the City of Corning, Town of Erwin or Village of Painted Post you should not assume the conditions are identical in all parts of the District. In addition, we have to consider visibility and again, that can vary based on the weather in a particular area.



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Please note:

Reliability of District-to-parent digital communication (School Messenger, Social Media and Website) is subject to the District having electricity, internet access and cellular service available at the time. Localized or wide-scale power outages and/or cellular/internet outages may affect District communications and your ability to receive them. In the event of this type of situation, our primary focus is to attempt to contact local TV and radio media to get messages out. We recommend having a battery powered radio on hand to receive announcements from us via local media.



Visit our website:
www.corningareaschools.com

News about school closings

During this season we are faced with ice and snow that may cause hazardous road conditions. If these conditions exist please:

- Listen to area radio or TV stations. If schools are closed, or their opening is delayed, an announcement will be made shortly after 5:30 a.m.
- Do not call the Superintendent of Schools or Director of Transportation. Telephone lines need to stay open in order to give or receive vital information.
- Do not call radio or TV stations. Watch or listen for announcements. It is essential that their telephone lines be kept open so school officials can contact them if necessary (or go to their websites where many will publish closings online).
- Know that the final decision on sending your child to school on a snowy, icy, or extremely cold morning is yours and would be treated as an excused absence. On some days schools may be open and the roads generally safe, but you may feel that conditions near your home are hazardous.
- Know that all activities, including community use of school facilities are cancelled for that day and evening when schools are closed.