

MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Learning and Achieving School

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Magnolia Public School's response to inclement winter weather days:

Dear Community,

With the unusual circumstances during the 2020-21 school year, closures related to inclement weather will look slightly different. One of the unique factors of this school year is that we have developed expertise in teaching in a full-virtual environment. With this in mind, **our approach for responding to inclement weather will be to close the building for in-person instruction while providing virtual learning.** We will refer to this day as a "Virtual Inclement Day."

- **On any day when the building is closed for inclement weather, we will shift to our remote day schedule for grades 1-8, running virtual instruction from 8:35-12:35. Afternoon groups would be canceled.**
- **Preschool and Kindergarten will run their normal AM and PM remote session times.**

It has not escaped us that a "snow day" is exciting for children and provides the opportunity for them to go out and play in the snow. The argument of "let kids be kids" is a strong one; however, it is our intention to preserve the integrity of the calendar with minimal changes and reserving "snow days" for significant events that may involve power outages and circumstances that do not allow us to provide virtual learning. We feel afternoons will provide a good break to enjoy the weather and all the joy it may bring to the kids.

Some families may wonder why we don't just delay the start of school when there is snow, and then have the in-person children report later in the morning. If we called a two-hour delay and moved the start time back to 10:35 AM, our students would be in school from roughly 10:35-2:35 to satisfy the Department of Education mandates. Having students and staff in school across the lunch hour without a break for food is simply not reasonable. The alternative of bringing students and staff to school at 10:35 AM and sending them home at 12:35 PM is equally impractical because it would not count as a full day of school.

HOW DO WE MAKE OUR DECISION?

We make the decision to open or close our schools in bad weather based on a careful analysis of many factors, such as:

- Information on road conditions from the borough.

- The amount of accumulated snow and ice.
- Weather predictions, including whether precipitation will continue.
- Building and grounds conditions.
- Decisions made by neighboring districts.

Many superintendents (colleagues in adjacent districts) confer. However, please keep in mind that, because Magnolia is a walking district, there will be times we will be open while other schools around us may close due to busing issues.

WHO MAKES THE DECISION?

Superintendent Karen Macpherson, in consultation with the Supervisor of maintenance, and our principal.

HOW ARE FAMILIES NOTIFIED?

You will receive an e-mail and phone call from our school messaging system. Also, you may check our district website for information, as well as Class DOJO. Checking local TV and radio stations (KYW News Radio, CBS Philly, 6 ABC, NBC 10, Fox 29) should be your last resort as there is always a delay between our reporting to them and their posting. Our school's number is 584.

WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE?

We try very hard to make the decision by 5:30 a.m., or earlier when possible.

FAMILY DECISIONS

Although we all do our absolute best in this process, we know that often no perfect decision exists. We know you trust us to do our best, and we trust you to make the best personal decisions for your family as well. For example, if, based on current weather conditions, you do not feel as though it is safe for your children to attend school, please keep them at home. They should attend virtually. If they do not, it is an unexcused absence.

In closing, we appreciate all of your patience and understanding when making these decisions.

Karen Macpherson,
Superintendent