



**Board of Education**  
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Dr. Thomas Y. McDowell  
Interim Superintendent of Schools  
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Dear Parent or Guardian:

I want to take this opportunity to inform you of the District's procedures regarding school closings, delays, and early dismissals.

The decision to change school schedules is made after careful review of information collected from the local Police, Highway, School Maintenance Departments, and a local weather service. Road conditions, sidewalk status, precipitation, temperatures and forecasts are considered when making a determination to delay or close schools. In some circumstances, a delay may be upgraded to a school closing. Information related to delayed openings and school closures is broadcasted on television and radio stations typically by 5:45 a.m. The safety of our children is the priority factor in all decision making.

**Blackboard Connect 5**

The *Blackboard Connect 5* communication system is a telephone messaging service that the district uses that enables us to personally communicate with parents and staff regarding emergency situations, school closings and delays, school events and other important issues impacting you and your children. In the event of a school closing or delay, a Blackboard message will be broadcast to all families by 5:45 a.m. During an emergency or weather related incident, calls will be made through the emergency mode to every single phone listed in the school records. During a normal school closing or delay, the calls only go to the numbers requested to receive the calls on school record for closings or delays.

**DELAYED OPENINGS**

- **This year we will utilize either a 90 minute (1 ½ hour) or a two (2) hour delay. The message you receive will inform you as to the length of the delay.**
- **In the event of a two (2) hour delay, preschool and morning kindergarten classes will be canceled.**
- Buses will arrive at stops approximately 90 minutes (1 ½ hours) or two (2) hours later than the usual time.
- **Please do not drop children off at school at their usual time.** Staff members are only available to supervise children twenty (20) minutes before a delayed school opening.
- Pre-school and kindergarten classes will receive timing details in a letter from the school principal.

**EARLY DISMISSAL**

- An announcement will be made on the radio and television stations, generally prior to 11:00 a.m.

- The high school is usually released at approximately 12:00 noon. (Please note that unusual circumstances may dictate an early dismissal before 12:00 noon.)
- AM kindergarten is dismissed at 11:30 a.m.
- There are no p.m. pre-school or kindergarten classes on early dismissal days.
- Some schools might not be released until 2:00 p.m. When an early dismissal is required, our mission is always the safety of our students.
- It is imperative that you keep a current emergency telephone number listed at your child's school building. Arrangements with a neighbor, or friend, to look after your child in the event you are not home would also be helpful.

In the event of school closings or early dismissals, all sporting events and student activities will be canceled.

### **Transportation Regulations**

Students in grades PreK-2 will be returned to school in the event an adult is not present at the bus stop to meet them.

In the event of a school closing, no children from the town will be bused, regardless of whether they are attending public schools or private schools.

### **All Storm Announcements**

Announcements will be made on the following radio and TV stations:

WATR – AM (1320)	WTIC – AM (1080)
WTNH – TV 8	WTIC – FM (96.5)
WFSB – TV 3	WVIT – TV 30

### **Websites – E-mail**

Notification of weather related closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals can be set up through the Board of Education's website at [www.watertownps.org](http://www.watertownps.org). Weather related information can also be accessed at [www.ctweather.com](http://www.ctweather.com).

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to monitor weather related delays, closings, and early dismissals and to cooperate with school personnel as we work to ensure student safety.

Finally, I want to assure you, once again, that our primary concern in calling school delays, early dismissal or closure is always the safety of our children. If parents feel conditions are unsafe, they should use their discretion and keep their children at home. Here's hoping for a warm and uneventful winter!

Sincerely,



Thomas Y. McDowell, Ed. D.  
Interim Superintendent of Schools