



School Closings 2016-17

How is the decision to close Cambridge-Isanti Schools made?

There is always a potential for severe weather warranting school closings or delays during Minnesota winter months, but the decision to close or delay school is never easy.

Many variables are considered in order to best ensure the safety of students and staff as we try to accommodate all the families in our district. Unfortunately, it is not possible to make a decision that does this perfectly.

The superintendent along with consultation from the transportation department and others makes the decision to hold or delay school based on current weather conditions, weather forecasts, and road conditions. Although other school districts are consulted when necessary, with the complexity of making weather-related decisions, even neighboring school districts may not reach the same decision.



First and foremost, safety is always the priority when making the decision to hold school or not.

There are three broad considerations made when it comes to closing schools due to the weather.

1. Safe Travel: Can Students Get to and from School Safely?

Transportation is always a key issue when determining whether to close or delay our schools. The ability for busses to safely and dependably transport students to and from school is determined in consultation with district transportation.

Cambridge-Isanti Schools has a much higher rate of students that take busses or are carpooled to school compared to metro area schools that have a much higher population of student walkers. Typically, this means the transportation method for our students is safer during inclement weather, particularly cold weather, than it is for metro area students.

Therefore, the factors influencing Cambridge-Isanti closings are invariably different from other school districts.

2. Predicting the Weather: It's Not the Cold, It's the Wind

Monitoring the radar about weather forecasts and road conditions is never completely predictable or exact but close watch is kept on these reports when there is a possibility of school closing. Based on these reports, a decision to close school due to dangerously cold weather may be made.

In the case of cold temperatures, the impact of sustained wind chills of 35-40 degrees below zero and greater

become a significant factor when considering students who wait outside for busses or typically walk to school. Wind chill is a great predictor of such dangers as frostbite and hypothermia as it measures the heat loss from the body when exposed to it. In result, wind chill is more of a concern than actual temperature because it turns unpleasant cold weather into dangerous weather.

3. Keeping Students in School: Students Belong in the Classroom

The goal of our district is to give families the option of whether to send their children to school during severe weather due to snow or cold temperatures when possible. Some families face hardship when school is canceled; especially related to employment or day care.

Families who choose not to send their children to school may do so **without** any penalty. Absences due to inclement weather will be excused. *Students' schools must receive proper notice.* Parents/guardians should report their children's absence if the decision is made to keep them home from school.

It is the district's intent to keep schools open every school day possible during inclement weather.

It is important to understand school closings that exceed the set calendar for our schools require make-up days in order to meet state requirements. The consideration is to avoid having to make up days and keep students in school to minimize the disruption of their learning.

Severe Weather Qs/As

Where can I get information on school closings due to the weather?

The decision to close schools will be announced with as much notice as possible via the parent/family emergency alert system, and local news stations. You can also refer to the district website and social media for further information on school closings. **Please do not call the radio or television stations, or the school switchboard.**

- www.c-ischools.org, [Facebook](#), and [Twitter @ISD911](#)
- WCCO TV
- KARE 11 TV
- KSTP TV
- FOX 9 TV
- KDLT TV
- 830 WCCO Radio
- KBEK 95.5 Radio
- WCMP 100.9 Radio

Please note that although the district notifies all local media stations listed, it cannot guarantee that closing notifications will be posted or announced by media stations, or that this will occur in a timely manner.

Please make sure your contact information and preferences are current in [Family Access](#) to receive notification by text message, email, and phone.



Our mobile app is here! You can access the app in the iTunes App Store and Google Play Store to begin receiving notifications on your mobile devices.



When are decisions to close or delay school made?

When a decision can be made the preceding night, the district will attempt to make an announcement by 10 p.m. In most cases, a decision won't be made until the morning. The goal is to make a decision to have a delayed start or close schools by 6 a.m. There will be no announcements if schools are open as scheduled.

What time should my child report to school when there is a two-hour delay?

In the instance of a two-hour delay, students should report to school exactly two hours later than the normal start time. For example, if your child's school starts at 8:10 a.m., your child should be at school at 10:10 a.m. This is the same for the time your child should report to his/her bus stop. If the normal pick-up time is 7:15 a.m., your child should be at the bus stop by 9:15 a.m.

What if the weather worsens during the school day?

The district tries to avoid unexpected early dismissals. However, on occasion, early dismissals are unavoidable. Parents/guardians are encouraged to have prior arrangements for supervision of their children.



We realize this is a difficult situation for families, so it is important for schools to be able to reach parents/guardians and designated childcare providers during daytime hours. Please be sure your children's schools have accurate emergency contact information when it is necessary to dismiss children during the regular school day. If the weather worsens and the schools remain open, parents/guardians have the option to pick up their students early by checking them out through the office following normal procedures.

We appreciate your patience and flexibility this winter and we hope this helps you understand the decision-making process for Cambridge-Isanti Schools as you make the best choices for your families. Please plan accordingly and travel safely this season!