

Northern Wells Community Schools

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Michael J. Springer, Superintendent

August 4, 2021

RE: Weather-Related Delays and Closures

Dear NWCS Parents:

Listed below are key points regarding school delays and school closings/eLearning days.

1. The decision to delay start times or close school campuses and implement an eLearning day will most likely occur between 5:00AM and 5:45AM.
2. All weather-related delays and closures will be posted on our website and distributed via Instant Connect (texts/emails), Twitter, and Facebook. They also will be broadcasted on the following TV stations: **21-ALIVE/FORT WAYNE NBC; WANE-TV;** and the following radio stations: **WOWO; Hot Talk 1380; K105; Mix 97.3; WAJI; WBCL; WLDE.** If we delay, the announcement will be “2-Hour Delay” and if we close school campuses and implement an eLearning day, the announcement will be “School Closed, eLearning Day”.
3. Unless otherwise included within the announcement our Bear Care and Bobcat Care programs will remain open during their regular hours. If we need to close our latchkey programs, the announcement will be “School Closed, eLearning Day, No Latchkey”.
4. The main purpose of a school delay is to provide bus drivers and families additional time to manage the inclement weather. Although we all welcome an extra two hours of sleep, not taking advantage of the additional time to prepare for the weather and to drive more slowly, really limits or eliminates the value of the school delay.
5. Students, who are unable to access WiFi on eLearning days, are expected to consult with their teachers for the completion of required work. Absences and unsubmitted assignments will be addressed in accordance with regular student handbook practices. Additional expectations regarding eLearning protocols and expectations can be found in each school’s student handbook.

When making weather-related decisions, as is the case with communicable diseases like COVID-19, there is a balancing act between protecting quality, onsite instructional minutes and maintaining safe practices. If we were not committed to protecting quality learning environments, implementing school delays or eLearning days would be easy and automatic decisions. They are not. Learning loss for students during COVID-19 lockdowns and quarantines has been well-documented. Our organization exists in order to provide high quality, daily, onsite instruction to students. We know that other needs such as safety concerns and professional development for our staff will take minutes from our instruction at times. We need to be very thoughtful and judicious in making decisions that sacrifice those instructional minutes.

Finally, as with all safety concerns, parents have the final decision. If school is not delayed or closed for inclement weather and the parent believes conditions are unsafe for the student to attend school, the parent always has the right to keep the student home without penalties or negative consequences.

Sincerely,
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Superintendent
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