

Weather-related schedule changes...who decides? When? How?

The district's 110 square miles can be a checkerboard of varying weather conditions. To keep tabs on the differences and potential problems, district personnel "drive the roads" starting at 3 am. Those road scouts report conditions to our transportation department and district administrators who decide if schedule adjustments are necessary and to what extent.

Understanding the need for thousands of people to know their decision, the early morning team's goal is to kick into action by **5 am**, the following system of notification:

- **Emergency weather network** relays our decision (and that of all regional districts) to a web page that the media uses for their reports.
 - TV stations scroll regional school schedules at the bottom of their screens during morning newscasts—ideally updating their scrolls all morning as the Internet system picks up school reports.
 - Radio stations announce schedules—also ideally including full reports and details as the information appears on their Internet sources.
- **District web page**, www.issaquah.wednet.edu, gives details and also connects to the emergency weather web page where parents and staff can check for information—sometimes getting it more quickly than it appears in the media.
- **District E-News messages** add a layer of communication links with all subscribers.
- **District level phone messages** inform those who call 837-7000.
- **School phone messages** have the same pre-dawn schedule information.

Weather-related details...how to get them?

Kindergarten, sports, and activities are among many programs impacted by schedule changes. How they are impacted depends upon the kind of schedule adjustment the weather necessitated. **It's easy to find out what this means to you:**

1. **Listen to the schedule announcements**—we use consistent and specific terms to describe the change for the day—those terms are the key to the details.
2. Check your school district **November calendar page** for a listing of those terms and for what each kind of schedule change means to each school-related program.
3. Or...you can find the same listing of terms and impacts in the **Emergency Transportation Bulletin**—mailed to each district family in November.

Why are schedule changes necessary anyway?

Deciding to delay or cancel school is a tough decision that must be made hours before buses and cars enter the roadways. Given the changeability of our weather and the size of our district, a decision may make sense in part of the district at one time and seem absolutely irrational at another time and place.

The paramount factor behind any change is **safety**, "*Is it or when will it be safe for thousands of students, parents, and staff to head to school?*"

The next most significant factor is **timing for communication**, "*Based upon conditions now and predictions for later, we must make a decision in time for the communication process to work.*"

What happens when there's a late start on a Learning Improvement Calendar Wednesday?

If a weather delay happens on Wednesday, we will shift **all schools'** Wednesday start times by the 1 or 2 hours traditionally required to ensure that roads are safe enough for travel to school. Wednesday afternoon dismissal times will not change.

What happens to school lunch on a "Weather Wednesday?"

- If school is one hour late on Wednesday, middle and high schools WILL serve school lunch.
- If school is two hours late on Wednesday, middle and high schools will NOT serve school lunch.*
- Whether or not school is one or two hours late on Wednesday, elementary schools WILL serve school lunch.

**On Wednesdays, middle and high schools start later than other days. That Learning Improvement Calendar "late start" on Wednesdays, when combined with a two-hour weather delay, would mean some students would be arriving at school AFTER their normal lunch hour.*

Can you help us improve?

If you have insights about ways we can better alert you to schedule changes, we'd love to hear your ideas. Please call 425-837-7004.