



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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Determining the Status of School during Inclement Weather

Below are the procedures and protocols District 97 will use when deciding whether to cancel classes and/or after-school activities due to inclement weather.

Variables affecting the decision

District 97 examines a number of variables when deciding whether to hold classes and/or afterschool activities during incidents of inclement weather. These variables include:

- Weather forecasts from local, regional and national weather services that include advisories, watches, warnings, the amount and timing of precipitation, and temperature (i.e., hot and cold; actual temperature, as well as temperature with wind chill or heat index)
- Internal and external building conditions
- Availability of bus transportation and food service
- Conditions of streets, sidewalks and alleyways throughout the community

While we carefully weigh each of these variables when making weather-related decisions, the number one factor and our top priority is always to preserve and protect the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff.

While opinions differ on how to best achieve this, we try to make a prudent and reasoned decision that balances the relative benefits and risks.

As a matter of courtesy, the superintendents from districts 97, 90 and 200 often confer when inclement weather threatens the area. They also consult with village officials from their respective towns, as well as any vendors that provide important and necessary services for students (e.g., food and transportation).

All three districts strive to be in alignment on these decisions when conditions and circumstances allow.

However, each superintendent will ultimately decide on the best course of action based on the needs of their individual student populations. This means that there may be times when District 97's decision differs from the one made by districts 90 and 200.

Communicating the final decision

When faced with a forecast of inclement weather, it has become increasingly more common for school districts to announce a cancellation the afternoon or evening before the heavy precipitation or severe temperatures descend upon the area. By doing so, districts can provide families, faculty and staff with additional time and flexibility to plan for the closure. While we understand and appreciate that having as much advance notice as possible is preferable in these situations, the weather during the past few years has proven to be increasingly unpredictable.

Whenever possible, **District 97 will seek to make and communicate decisions regarding weather-related closings by approximately 8 p.m. the day before.** This will include notifying stakeholders if the forecast or conditions warrant additional monitoring prior to making a final decision. If the forecast changes or conditions deteriorate after 8 p.m., we will let people know about the status of classes and/or afterschool activities no later than 5:30 a.m. the next day. Barring any unusual or unforeseen circumstances (e.g., a significant change in temperature), a decision to cancel school will not be rescinded.

We will use the SchoolMessenger notification system's phone and email functions to communicate weather-related decisions with families, faculty and staff. Please log in to your InfoSnap account or contact your child's

school to help ensure that we have your most up-to-date contact information on file. In addition to sharing updates via SchoolMessenger, we will post announcements on the district's family of websites and social media accounts. We will also post our status on the Emergency Closing Center website, which is a publicly accessible resource that media outlets use to gather information about school closings.

Conclusion

As noted above, we consider many factors when deciding to cancel school. We also recognize and respect the potential challenges that a school closure might create for our families, faculty and staff, and will take them into account when making our decisions.