

## Emergency Information

Link: [For the most up to date weather related school closing, delay, and dismissal information](#)

Link: [Get notified via email when the weather affects Darien Public Schools](#)

Link: [Click here for a listing of local radio and television stations which broadcast weather information](#)

August, 2009

Dear Parents and Staff:

As we approach the start of the new school year, a review of our weather-related procedures is timely.

During adverse weather conditions, the decision to cancel school, delay the opening of school, or early dismiss school is primarily informed by the need to ensure the safety of students and staff. The final decision will ultimately be made by the Superintendent of Schools. Typically, I begin assessing conditions between 4:00-4:30 a.m. unless weather conditions the previous evening warrant a cancellation. My decision will be based upon information from a variety of sources, such as the weather service, the police and public works departments, and Mr. Paul Engemann, our Director of Facilities, Construction and Operations, who assesses road and parking lot conditions.

**If school must be cancelled due to weather related emergencies**, the decision will be made no later than 5:30 a.m. You can expect the announcement of the cancellation within a half hour on radio and TV stations, as well as on our website <http://www.darienps.org>. You will receive an e-mail and/or text message from **Ed-Alert**, if you register. To register, please go to the school district website. Do not call your school or the central office, as our phone lines cannot handle excessive volume. Your best source of information is the media and websites. Since a decision to cancel is rarely made the night before, the most common time to learn of my decision is after 5:45 a.m.

When school is cancelled, no activities will be held in the buildings and all school-related and extracurricular events will be cancelled. A decision to close schools for the day, once made, will not change.

**If schools are delayed due to weather**, the decision also will be made by 5:30 a.m. The decision to have a 90 minute delayed opening is based upon the available information that travel and weather conditions are expected to sufficiently improve to open schools. However, parents should continue listening to designated radio and TV stations following the announcement of a delayed opening. If travel conditions do not improve or if they worsen, the delayed opening may be changed to a full day closing. Any such change will be communicated via the media and website sources.

**If weather forecasts and conditions indicate that an early dismissal would be in the best interest of our students and staff**, we will communicate such a decision via radio, TV, our website, and **Ed-Alert**. These sources will provide more information than can be gained through a call to the schools or central office. An early dismissal decision will be made no later than one hour prior to the dismissal. Again, media announcements will occur within a half hour. It is critical that

parents have an emergency plan in place for child care should children be dismissed early from school.

**Please note that there are two early dismissal times for weather related emergencies depending on the timing of the arrival of inclement weather:**

**(1) In the event of a Morning Emergency Dismissal due to inclement weather**, all students, including kindergartners, will be dismissed according to the following schedule:

High School	10:30 a.m.	Hindley, Royle, Tokeneke	11:00 a.m.
Middlesex	10:30 a.m.	Holmes, Ox Ridge	11:30 a.m.

All students will have the same bus stops as they had in the morning. No lunches will be served at school on those days, but elementary students will have a snack prior to dismissal.

**(2) In the event of an Afternoon Emergency Dismissal due to inclement weather**, all students, including kindergartners, will also have the same bus stops as they had in the morning. Lunch, however, will be served to all students. Please note that this early afternoon emergency closing time is the same time schedule as when we have regularly scheduled early dismissals for conference days and before certain holidays. Also note that, regardless of whether we have an emergency closing or a scheduled early dismissal, kindergarten students will be dismissed along with all the other students in grades 1-5. The afternoon emergency dismissal times are:

High School	12:20 p.m.	Hindley, Royle, Tokeneke	1:00 p.m.
Middlesex	12:30 p.m.	Holmes, Ox Ridge	1:25 p.m.

In the final analysis, **parents make the decision whether they will send their children to school on those days when inclement weather is not sufficiently serious to close or delay opening the schools.** Rest assured that we will do our very best to make timely, rational decisions, based upon the best weather and travel information available at the time. Your understanding and cooperation is always appreciated when these decisions are made.

Sincerely yours,

Donald P. Fiftal  
Superintendent of Schools

**P.S. The Darien Public Schools has instituted an emergency notification system called Ed-Alert. To subscribe to the free Ed-Alert service, go to the school district website at [www.darienps.org](http://www.darienps.org) and log on as a subscriber to the emergency/urgent announcements that will go directly to your computer or cell phone.**