

SCS Families and Community Members,

As we have shared the last couple of years, the decision to delay or close school is made with many factors taken into serious consideration. As always, regardless of the decision that we make in the evening or morning hours, if you feel it is safer to have your child stay home, that is a parental decision, and it will be respected by the school system. Here is a quick overview of the manner in which delays and closings are determined:

### **Delays and Closings:**

The determination of whether to close school or delay is not a specific science, but rather it is the culmination of a lot of hard work and effort by a small group of people. The process starts the night before any potential inclement weather days. The first step is the communication with several other districts, as well as with essential personnel within SCS. We start talking around 5 to 6 in the evening and then continue to monitor the change of weather for the rest of the night.

We use the following philosophies as guidelines:

- Try to make the decision to delay or close the night before by 9:00 p.m. in order to allow families time to plan accordingly. If no delay is called the night before and a dramatic change in the forecast or weather conditions makes it necessary to delay, then I make a decision by 5:30 a.m. If we are already on a delay and need to change to close school, I make those decisions by approximately 7:30 a.m.
  
- Typically, I look at whether or not the temperature is going to be in the range of -20 to -30 degrees below zero wind-chill. **However, there are SEVERAL factors that may change this as the temperature we use.** Some of these include:
  - How strongly the wind is blowing
  - How packed down is the snow that will impact drifting
  - Is there or has there been previous ice or potential of ice on the roads
  - Have plows been able to clear and salt properly
  - Have we had any issues with the diesel buses starting
  - Prediction of wind chill by hour – sometimes it may actually be colder at 10:00 a.m. than at the regular start time due to wind chill factors
  - Timing of the storm or cold weather, as well as we look at how far into winter we are (first delays are sometimes on days where weather is not as cold as those later in the winter as this gives families and students time to find hats, gloves, etc.).

Announcing our decisions to delay or cancel school is also an involved process. Detailed information can be found on our websites under the Delays/Closings tab. We provide many different ways to inform you of these decisions, including:

- o Local news stations (WRTV, WTHR, WISH-TV, WXIN)
- o School websites ([www.scs.k12.in.us](http://www.scs.k12.in.us))
- o Facebook ([www.facebook.com/sheridanschools](http://www.facebook.com/sheridanschools))
- o Twitter (@sheridanschool1)
- o Instagram (sheridanschools)
- o Text Alerts and email notifications sent through our student management system to parent with cell phone and email addresses on file with your child's school office

As you can see, many factors go into this decision, and we do not take it lightly. There are several of us who are up and ready to go at 4:00 a.m. each of these days, driving the roads and checking the conditions. Please know we always try to make the proper decision based solely on the safety of our families and the entire school corporation, but again, if you feel your situation is unsafe for your child, you have the right to make that parental decision. We try our best to soundly do what is right.

Again, thank you for all your support of Sheridan Community Schools and if you would have further questions, please feel free to contact me at [dmundy@sheridan.k12.in.us](mailto:dmundy@sheridan.k12.in.us)

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Sheridan Community Schools