Illini Bluffs CUSD #327

Collaboration. Community. Commitment

Dear Illini Bluffs Families,

As we move into the winter months, I want to share information about how Illini Bluffs will handle snow, ice, extreme cold, and other weather-related conditions. Winter weather in central Illinois can change quickly, and any decision to delay, cancel, or release school early is made with one priority in mind: the safety of our students, staff, and families.

Winter brings the possibility of snow, ice, and dangerously low temperatures. In the event of severe weather, the decision to close school is made with careful consideration. If school is closed due to weather, Illini Bluffs will not use "E-Learning Days." My philosophy has always been that a day of in-person instruction is far more valuable than attempting to replicate that learning virtually.

How Decisions Are Made

- Making the right call during winter weather involves multiple steps and several sources of real-time information:

Early-Morning Road Checks

- I personally begin driving district roads before 5:00 AM to evaluate road conditions firsthand.

Collaboration With Local Partners

- I communicate directly with:
    - Local road commissioners
    - The Peoria County Highway Department
    - Neighboring school districts
        - This helps us determine road safety and the forecast's impact across our region.

District Size and Geography

- Our district covers a large geographic area, and conditions can vary significantly across it. Road conditions in one area may look very different from those in another.

Rural Transportation Needs

- Because we bus a high percentage of our students, we must ensure buses can safely complete their routes.

Rapidly Changing Conditions

- Winter weather systems can shift quickly, sometimes hour by hour. While we aim to make decisions early, flexibility is sometimes unavoidable.

Perry Weather

- We also use Perry Weather and consult directly with a meteorologist who provides Illini Bluffs–specific forecasts to support accurate, real-time decision-making.

Extreme Cold

- Wind chill advisories, watches, or warnings influence decisions, especially when students may be waiting outside for buses.

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No E-Learning Days for Weather Closures

- Illini Bluffs will not use E-Learning Days for weather-related closures.
- All closures will be treated as traditional emergency days.
- Emergency days may be added to the end of the school year, depending on how many are used.
- We remain committed to maintaining the quality of in-person instruction.

Notification to Families

- Families will be notified in several ways to ensure timely communication:
    - All-call, text message, and email by 6:30 AM.
    - Posting on the district website and the Illini Bluffs Facebook page.
    - Notifying local news media outlets (TV and radio) so the information appears in regional weather updates and school closure listings
    - Please ensure your contact information is up to date within Teacher Ease.

Extracurriculars & Activities

- Illinois weather is unpredictable, and conditions can improve or worsen quickly. Because of this, extracurricular decisions may not always match the school-day decision.
    - If we have a snow day:
        - Road conditions may improve later in the day, allowing some extracurricular activities, practices, or events to continue. These decisions will be made based on updated road reports and staff availability.
    - If we have a regular school day:
        - There may be situations where worsening afternoon or evening weather requires us to cancel extracurriculars, even though school was held earlier.
    - If we have an activity scheduled on an off-school day, such as holiday break time or weekends, we may cancel due to forecasted or worsening weather conditions
- All decisions will prioritize safety, and we will communicate updates as quickly as possible.

Hollis Park District Before & After Care

- If school is closed, Before & After Care will also be closed.
- If the weather worsens after school, the After Care program may close early for safety.
- Families are encouraged to have backup childcare plans during the winter months.

Final Thoughts

- While we hope for a mild winter, we know the weather in Illinois can be unpredictable. Thank you for your flexibility and understanding as we make decisions that prioritize the safety and well-being of our students and staff.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate contact our schools.

Sincerely,
Dimitri Almasi, Superintendent, Illini Bluffs CUSD #327