



WEST SENECA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Offices • 675 Potters Road • West Seneca, New York 14224-2683
Telephone: 716/677-3100 • Facsimile: 716/677-3104

Matthew Bystrak
Interim Superintendent of Schools

October 18, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I hope you and your family have had time to enjoy this fall season and all of the wonderful colors. Very soon snow will start falling and we may be required to make decisions about closing schools because of bad weather. While we believe that our students are best served academically and socially by being in school, our top priority is their safety and sometimes that means we need to close our schools.

How do we make our decision to close schools?

We gather as much relevant information as possible and base our decision on that analysis. This process includes:

- *A review of data from forecasting services and statewide emergency systems
- *Information on road conditions from transportation staff, police, and highway supervisors
- *An assessment of the amount of accumulated snow and ice
- *Evaluation of anticipated duration of precipitation, weather predictions, temperature and wind chill data
- *Verification of building status, including availability of utility services and on site snow removal

Who makes the decision and when?

As interim superintendent of schools, I am responsible for the final determination. My decision is based on the above factors, as well as recommendations from the director of transportation, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds and the West Seneca Police Department . We try very hard to make the decision by 5:30 a.m. or the evening before, if possible, to give parents extra time to arrange alternate plans.

How is the public notified?

The District's mass calling service will be activated as soon as the decision to close schools is made. It will also be posted on the District home page.

Up-to-date information is also provided to the various radio stations: WBEN, WXRL, WHTT, WKSE, WTSS, WEDG, WGR, and television stations: WKBW, WGRZ, and WIVB and the district Website (www.wscschools.org).

Will we close schools if conditions worsen?

Once we make the decision to keep schools open, many parents leave for work. If we were to send students back home, many students would return to unsupervised bus stops and empty homes. **All of our buildings have emergency generators and systems as well as extra food and water to ensure student safety and comfort.** Our schools are safe places even when there are power failures elsewhere in the community. School is the safest place to keep the children while we contact parents and make arrangements for a safe return home.

Despite all of the high tech equipment, it is difficult to predict the weather in Buffalo, New York.

Although we do our best in this process, we know that seldom is there a perfect decision about closing school. **If you do not feel it is safe for your child to attend school, use your best judgment as to whether or not he or she should attend.** Also, please discourage teenagers from driving in bad weather conditions.

I hope that this explanation helps everyone understand the process that we use to make the best possible decision about school closings.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Bystrak
Interim Superintendent of Schools

MJB/ms

To improve communication, the West Seneca Central School District maintains several email lists. Sign up for as many or as few as you wish on our district website. You may access our website at www.wscschools.org, the link to sign up is on the left hand side of the page under District Highlights.