

Northgate School District
Closing and Delay Information

Due to the climate of our region, winter weather often creates challenges. The goal of the Northgate School District will always be to operate on a regular schedule to ensure that students are in a safe, supervised setting. However, there will be days when weather challenges will necessitate a change in schedule. This document provides an overview of the process for making weather decisions, factors that are taken into consideration and communication of schedule changes.

I. Process for monitoring weather:

- a. During the winter, Dr. Johns reviews the weekly forecast prior to the start of the week.
- b. Each evening, the weather for the next day is monitored for potential wind chill, snow accumulation and/or ice. This includes reviewing active weather alerts via the National Weather Service. Only on rare occasions will a decision be made about a delay or cancellation the night before. *Accurately* predicting the weather this far in advance is challenging. Therefore, most weather calls will be made in the early morning.
- c. Starting as early as 4:00 a.m., Dr. Johns gathers information about current and hourly weather forecasts, contacts the Head Custodian(s) and police chiefs. Dr. Johns also confers with other area Superintendents to discuss conditions.

II. Factors taken into consideration:

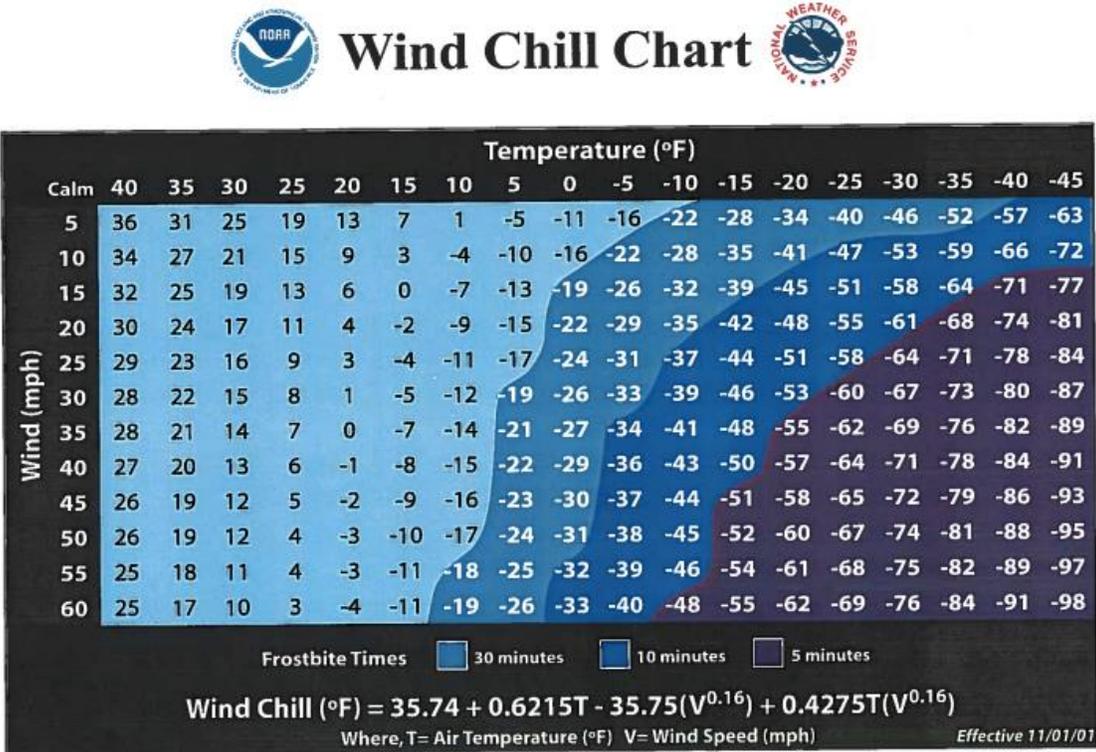
The following factors are taken into consideration: road conditions, ice accumulation, wind chill and conditions of the buildings (heat & electricity).

The National Weather Service has produced a Wind Chill Chart that provides information with regard to the combination of low temperatures and wind speed to determine wind chill. The chart also delineates the impact of wind chill on

frostbite. Generally, Dr. Johns will use this chart in combination with data from previously stated sources to determine whether the weather conditions pose a danger to students.

(Click on the National Weather Service link

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/windchill.shtml> to view the chart.)



III. Communication:

- a. Typically a decision will be made no later than 5:30 a.m. unless rapidly changing and/or unanticipated conditions require a decision to be made after this time.
- b. An announcement will be communicated through the following channels:
 - i. Phone notification
 - ii. Local TV stations

- iii. District website alert
- iv. District social media sites

2 Hour Delay or Cancellation?

A *2 hour delay* will be considered for these conditions:

- Road conditions are hazardous due to ice/snow but are expected to improve due to treatment or changing weather conditions.
- Wind chill/temperatures pose a hazard, but are expected to increase during the morning hours. (*Please note that it is not unusual during the winter for temperatures to DROP mid-morning. Therefore, a delay would cause students to arrive in colder temperatures than had they come in on-time. The hourly forecast will be used to determine if this may be the case.)

A *cancellation* will be considered for these conditions:

- Hazardous road conditions due to ice/snow that are not expected to improve.
- Blizzard conditions that prohibit visibility.
- Wind chill conditions which pose a frostbite hazard if exposure time approaches or exceeds 30 minutes.

Parent Role & Responsibility

Since Northgate is a walking district, it is extremely important that children be appropriately dressed during the winter months. When walking to school in inclement weather, children should be clothed in hats, scarves, warm winter jackets and boots. We realize some of our families face challenges in being able to provide this type of clothing. In this situation, please contact your principal. The schools keep this type of clothing on hand and will work with families to make sure all children have appropriate winter clothing.

Frequently Asked Questions

My child attends A.W. Beattie Career and Technical Center. What happens when Northgate closes or delays?

Students attending A.W. Beattie will follow the Northgate schedule in the event of a closing or delay. If Northgate closes, these students will not report to school even if A.W. Beattie is in session. If Northgate has a 2 hour delay, students will report to the high school at 10:30 a.m. They will not attend A.W. Beattie classes that morning.

Pittsburgh Public Schools is on a 2 hour delay. Why aren't we?

There are times when PPS will run on a delay and Northgate will not. There are several reasons why this may happen. PPS may need extra time to ensure their busses start, they may have issues with heat/electricity and/or they may delay to ensure that all of their students are traveling to school in daylight. Since we are a walking district, we don't have to worry about busses and our students travel to school in daylight when we run a normal schedule.

It's really cold out. Why didn't we have a delay?

During winter weather, most of our students are driven to school by a parent or relative. When we delay, more students end up walking to school. Therefore, we will always try to run on time.

There are times during the winter when the temperature at 8:00 a.m. is actually warmer than it is at 10:00 a.m. The hourly forecast is monitored to determine if this will be the case.

My child has a health condition that is affected by really cold weather. I'm concerned about her walking to school. What should I do?

It is a parent's prerogative to keep a child at home if they feel conditions are not safe for that particular child. In this case, the parents need to notify the school of the situation and the absence/tardy will be excused.

The weather was really bad outside. Why didn't you close school?

It will always be our goal to remain open. Many of our parents work outside of the home during the day. Therefore, we will try to remain open to ensure that all of our students are safe, supervised and fed. In cases where weather poses a significant threat, the district will be closed.