

Caledonia Community Schools **School Closures and Two-Hour Delays**

Caledonia Community Schools

The decision to close and/or delay school is not taken lightly. School may be closed or delayed due to weather or other emergency situations.

Living in Michigan, we know that the weather can change rapidly, and meteorologists can only predict what might happen with the weather. Caledonia Community Schools covers 100 square miles and conditions can be different in one area of the district than they are in another. Our district has varying road configurations to consider including country roads with open fields, gravel roads, developments, and primary corridors. Approximately 2500 students are transported to school via school bus, almost 400 high school students drive to school, which leaves about 1500 students who are driven to school by parents.

Assessing Roads

In inclement weather, designated staff drive the roads in our district to check for driving conditions. Our team is on the road at 4:00 AM each morning, and drive over 100 miles of roads. This allows us to assess various types of roads and their conditions. We communicate with each other as well as other district teams. This communication gives us insight to conditions around us, and how they may or may not improve. We consider all of the information and try to make a decision by 5:15 AM. There are times when situations change quickly and the decision may have to be made later.

Factors of Consideration

When assessing roads we consider many factors. These factors may include the following:

Current Weather Conditions

Weather Radar

Weather Forecast

Evidence of Plow Trucks

Road Treatments – Salt and/or Sand

Communication with Other School Districts

Weather Elements to Consider

Visibility

Wind Speeds

Snow Drifts

Sustained Wind Chills

Freezing Rain/Fog/Ice

Air and Ground Temperatures

Two-Hour Delay

We choose to use the two-hour delay option when we believe the conditions will improve over a two-hour period allowing us to safely transport students. On a two-hour delay, busses need to be on the roads by 8:00 AM. If we have reason to believe that road conditions will not improve, then we will generally close school. We do not use the two-hour delay as a strategy to continue to observe or assess roads. There may be times that we need to close after calling two-hour delay, but it is not a strategy we employ.

Early Dismissal for Middle School and High School Only

If conditions worsen during the day, we may need to have extra time in the afternoon to transport our high school and middle school students so we can get back to the elementary schools for regular dismissal time. On such rare occasions, we would dismiss the high school and middle school about 20 – 40 minutes early. Staff will remain at the schools, until the normal dismissal time, with any students who are not riding the bus or need to stay for parent pick up. If we dismiss early, we would broadcast the information so parents can make appropriate arrangements as needed. We also recommend that families consider providing house keys to their older children so they can enter the home.

Parents

Please remember road conditions and emergency situations can change quickly. We will do our best to make the best decision for the safety of all students. We know that as parents you are the best judge of your child's experience and abilities driving in inclement weather. Please exercise discernment in determining the conditions in which your child can drive safely.

Please have a plan in place for school closures and delays. If school is delayed, your child's bus pick up time would be exactly two hours later than your normal time. In the event of a two hour delay, breakfast will not be served, and we will not have morning preschool or KCTC.

Please watch local news media (Wood TV 8, WZZM 13, Fox 17, WWMT 3) for school closings or delays. You may also choose to sign up for text alerts through local media websites.