

February 9, 2010

Dear Parents,

When trying to determine whether or not school is closed many things are taken into consideration. On severe weather mornings, we begin to assess conditions between 4:00-4:30 a.m., with student and staff safety as our top priority.

The variables we consider include:

- Local weather forecasts;
- Road conditions;
- Temperature and wind chill;
- Availability of busses and drivers
- Ability of the majority of staff to get to school;
- Appropriate functioning of the school building, i.e. furnaces/heat/water etc.

We communicate with the local superintendents of surrounding districts at 4:45 a.m. to discuss and share information. Although circumstances may result in all of the districts closing, and we tend to follow Deerfield High School District 113 and Deerfield District 109, the final decision rests with each district.

The decision on whether or not to close Bannockburn School is generally made by Dr. Desmond and myself between 5:00 and 5:30 a.m., unless the conditions the night before warrant an evening decision. To notify parents of school closings, we contact the Emergency School Closing Center, which broadcasts the information on television and radio stations. Note: These broadcasts may only update this information in 30-minute intervals. In addition, (if possible) we put a notice on our school webpage indicating that school is closed.

Parents are notified of a school closing by the automated Honeywell Instant Alert System through the contacts you have provided to our school district (home phone, cell phone, and/or email). Note: Based upon prior implementation of the Honeywell System, the actual time it has taken to notify parents has ranged from 15 minutes to 45 minutes. The delays are caused by communication lines being stretched beyond capacity based on the volume of messages being sent throughout the United States.

If an early release decision is made during the school day, we will implement the Honeywell System to communicate with parents, rest assured we will not send children home on the bus to an empty house.

We appreciate your continued support.

Sincerely,

Debbie Barnes