

Seattle Public Schools

Ice/Snow

Transportation Plan

2016-2017



INTRODUCTION

Inclement Weather and Ice and Snow

From time to time throughout the school year, weather may force a change in the District's normal operating routines.

The District will make every effort to adhere to the established school calendar, bell schedules, and routes. However, there may be times when weather conditions make the usual routes unsafe or impassable. This document provides information about how decisions are made regarding the delay or possible closure of school, how information is disseminated to families, and what parents and guardians can expect.

As inclement weather and traffic will affect bus schedules and routes, we ask that families be patient and understanding. We will do everything in our control to provide accurate information regarding pick-up times for your students. Please remember, the safety of your children is our primary concern.

Recommendation and Decisions

At approximately 2:00 a.m. on inclement weather days, designated school district transportation and operational personnel begin ongoing communications with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Seattle school district transportation staff, and surrounding school districts to assess the ability to safely transport students via school buses. The determination will be based on the status of arterials (major and minor), noting specific challenging areas; and existing and anticipated weather patterns. SDOT monitors Snow Watch on a regular basis for information on roadway temperatures and also receives and monitors forecasts with updates from Northwest WeatherNet as well as the National Weather Services.

Between 4:00 – 4:30 a.m. on these days, transportation staff will communicate their recommendations to the Assistant Superintendent of Operations. The Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent render the decision for that day's operations. When at all possible, decisions regarding school delays or closures are made by 5:00 a.m. for Seattle Public Schools.

Family Preparation for Inclement Weather

It is the responsibility of each family to have an inclement weather plan in place that can be put into action on short notice. We ask that you make sure your children have an alternate place to stay if you must be at work on a day when school has been delayed or cancelled. Please ensure that a neighbor, family member or center is able to care for or receive students, and please instruct students to report directly home or to their established care center immediately on arrival in the evening.

ICE & SNOW FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do I find out if the District has closed schools because of snowfall?

This information is available at the following website:
www.flashalert.net

Local television stations, including the following, broadcast this information:

- <http://www.king5.com/>
- <http://www.komonews.com/>
- <http://www.kirotv.com/>
- <http://www.q13fox.com/>
- <http://www.psetv.org/>

The following radio stations broadcast this information:

AM Radio Stations		Min	FM Radio Stations		Min
KCIS	630	30	KPLU	88.5	30
KIXI	880	15	KGRG	89.9	
KOMO	1000	15	KSER	90.7	30
KGRG	1330		KMPS	94.1	15
KUOW	1340	30	KUOW	94.9	30
KRKO	1380	15	KIRO	97.3	15
			KCMS	105.3	30
			KRWM	106.9	30

Please note that there may be **up to a 30 minute delay** for television and radio stations to broadcast this information once they receive it from the District. In addition, some television and radio stations may modify the message slightly before broadcasting it.

2. How and when does the District make a decision about closing schools due to snowfall?

If snow occurs during non-school hours, District staff survey road conditions, monitor projected weather patterns, and provide a recommendation, on the safety of transporting students, to the Superintendent by 5:00 a.m. of the morning before school. The Superintendent then makes the decision, and the decision is communicated to <http://flashalert.net> and television and radio stations as noted in the response to question No. 1. The decision is made this early to allow parents enough time to plan their day.

If snow occurs during the school day – or if a major snowfall alert is issued by the weather service during the school day, the District will evaluate the effect weather conditions have on safe transportation of students and may decide to:

- Close schools early
- Maintain normal operating hours
- Delay bus departure time until traffic conditions improve

The Superintendent will decide by 11:00 a.m. either to release school early or continue to operate school for a full day.

3. If a snowfall occurs, and schools are to stay open and operate on regular routes, will there be an announcement?

No.

4. What kinds of announcements does the District make?

The District makes the one of the following four announcements:

- (1) Seattle Public Schools: **Schools open on time** – buses operating on snow routes. No door-to-door service. No Preschool or Head Start.
- (2) Seattle Public Schools: **Two hours late** – buses operating on snow routes. No door-to-door service. No Preschool or Head Start.
- (3) Seattle Public Schools: **Two hours late** – buses operating on regular routes. No door-to-door services. No Preschool or Head Start.

For (1), (2), and (3) above, all school and program staff are expected to report at the regular time.

- (4) Seattle Public Schools: **Schools closed.**

If the District makes any of these four announcements, the following transportation is also **canceled** for that day:

- All special services house pick-up routes
- All noon routes
- All before and after school activity routes
- All field/athletic trips
- All preschool and Head Start routes
- All out-of-District routes

5. I've noticed that sometimes schools are closed throughout the District even though there's no snow in downtown Seattle. Why is this?

Although the downtown area may be clear, there may be ice and snow in outlying areas, side streets, and hills. The District must consider the safety of all students when making a decision about whether or not to close schools.

6. I'm a parent or guardian and my student has assigned transportation. How do I find out where my child should catch the bus if the District is on snow routes?

The District mails letters to parents/guardians or families identifying these routes during the month of November. Parents can also call 206-252-0900 to identify their snow route.

7. What is a snow route and how is it determined? Why is it different than a regular route?

The District, in collaboration with the City of Seattle, identifies centrally located streets and major arterials that will be cleared first in the event of a snowstorm. Snow routes use these streets and arterials to improve student safety.

8. Does the District use robo-calls to notify parents and staff about possible school closures?

Yes. The District automatically phones parents and staff about school closures, if the decision has been made the night before.

9. Are there winter safety tips for students who are walking to school or to their bus stop?

- Students should allow extra time to get to their school or bus stop in the morning.
 - Arrival at the bus stop five (5) minutes before the scheduled pickup up time is recommended.
- Students should be dressed properly for the weather.
 - Bright clothing will make students more visible for bus drivers and other motorists, especially in the early morning and late evening.
 - Warm clothing is also recommended as transportation delays may occur.
- Young children should be walked to their school or bus stop; older children should walk in groups.
 - The location of a student's bus stop may be different from their normal stop location if the District is operating on snow routes.
- Pedestrian travel should be done on sidewalks or a safe walking path.
 - When there is no sidewalk and you have to walk on the road, be sure to walk facing traffic.
 - Walk across a street at corners, use crosswalks whenever possible.
 - When crossing a street, look left, right and left.
 - Listen for the sound of car motors, sirens, horns or emergency announcements before stepping into the street.

10. Where can I find information about Metro/ORCA?

Please see the Metro website at <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/alerts/snow> for their snow routes.

PROCEDURES FOR SNOWFALL OCCURRING DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Ice and Snow conditions occurring during the school day can cause significant transportation problems in returning students to their homes.

In the event that there is snowfall after school opens OR a major snowfall alert is issued by the weather service, the Superintendent will decide by 11:00 A.M. either to release school early or to continue to operate school for a full day.

The following procedures will be utilized to provide the best possible service under these conditions:

A. COMMUNICATIONS

If a major snowfall or snowfall alert occurs while school is in session, and the Superintendent decides to release school early, the District's Communication Office notifies families via the automated School Messenger system. The Communication Office also places a notice on the District's website and alerts the media.

The Communication Office notifies school district staff, including principals, via email. Staff are also notified via the School Messenger system.

B. DECISIONS

Depending on the evaluation of several factors, such as time of day, availability of drivers, road and weather conditions, a decision will be made whether to dismiss schools early, on schedule, or to hold students until conditions improve to ensure buses can proceed through traffic.

If there is a decision to dismiss schools early, high schools and middle schools will be dismissed first, followed by elementary schools.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

Each building principal or program manager will be responsible for the following:

1. BOARDING OF BUSES

Ensure all students board their assigned buses. No alternate transportation will be provided.

The principal or program managers may not leave the building until after all of the buses have completed their routes and the Transportation Office has been contacted.

2. RECEIVING CENTER FOR OTHER SCHOOLS

Receive students from buses unable to complete routes due to weather and street conditions. Drivers are instructed that if it is impossible to continue a route, or if it is

7:00 P.M., they are to proceed to a designated receiving school (shown on page 7) and escort their students into the building. Central staff will be sent to assist at these sites. The receiving school will be responsible for contacting the sending school as well as the parents.

3. **STUDENT MEDICAL PROBLEMS**

Drivers should be kept informed by school staff about students with known medical problems that may require short rides. School staff and bus drivers need to consult about transporting these students home on school buses during inclement weather conditions. If there is concern the bus will be delayed in traffic, the school should hold the students at school and arrange for emergency transportation via 911.

Schools may have bused students with known medical problems (e.g., a diabetic requiring insulin shots) where delayed medical treatment may result in physical complications. To reduce the potential for this type of problem, schools are encouraged to maintain an emergency supply of medicine for students known to have a medical problem.

For all students who have severe, complicated or fragile medical conditions, emergency transportation plans shall be discussed and documented on the student's IEP or IHP in the fall. Such discussion should include the parents, staff, building principal, and school nurse. Plans may include, as appropriate, retention at home, principal contacts with parents to pick-up students at the first indication of school closure or adverse weather conditions, emergency transportation, etc.

**Designated Receiving Schools during Ice and Snow Emergencies
2016-17**

<u>Region</u>	<u>School/Site</u>
Central	Washington Catharine Blaine Coe TOPS
Northeast	Roosevelt Jane Addams Laurelhurst
Northwest	Ballard Ingraham Whitman Broadview Thomson Bagley BF Day (buses will use Fremont Avenue North for parking)
Southeast	Mercer South Shore Beacon Hill Dunlap Emerson Van Asselt @ AAA
West Seattle	Concord Gatewood Lafayette Roxhill West Seattle Elementary Boren K-5 STEM Arbor Heights