

## **ANNUAL NOTIFICATION: WEATHER RELATED SCHOOL CLOSURES**

### **Snow Day Plan of Action: Winter is Coming**

When the decision to close school is made, I'll begin by sending an email and phone message through our mass communication program School Messenger. School Messenger is updated each evening by connecting with PowerSchool. The primary phone number and email address provided by the parent/guardian will be the contact information used for these messages. If you have not provided the most updated phone or email address to your child's school you will not be contacted.

A message will be sent at 5:30 a.m. to instructional staff, custodians, food service staff, bus drivers, media groups (KXLY TV, KLEW TV, Inland Northwest News Radio/NWPR, and KQQQ/KHTR Radio), principals, and other local non-MSD school administrators. A second message will go out at 6:00 a.m. to families. I will also post a brief message on Moscow School District #281, our Facebook page, as soon as possible after 5:30 a.m.

### ***Frequently asked questions regarding school closures are:***

- **How are snow days decided?**

First, it begins as early as 4:00 a.m. when Greg Harris, Transportation Supervisor, drives to check some of the county roads. He also contacts county/city road departments to check on road conditions and their ability to keep roads open. At the same time, I will be driving around town to check on street conditions. I will also be monitoring online weather sites and viewing traffic cameras located within Moscow and along Highway 95 to view weather conditions present or moving in our direction. After the two of us have gathered as much information possible we discuss what we learned and then I will make the final decision. This all must be done prior to 5:15 a.m. to give enough time to notify people before the first bus rolls out of the parking lot.

- **Why does the Moscow School District not utilize a two-hour delayed start on questionable days?**

School bus drivers are not full-time employees and many of our drivers have other jobs to go to between routes. We do not have spare drivers to meet the needs of transportation on a delayed school start.

- **Will the District announce an early release if the weather gets worse throughout the day?**

Typically, I will not as there is a real concern that a student may be going home to a locked house or no one home. We would only make such a call in a worst case scenario. However, we do encourage parents to pick up their child at their earliest convenience if they believe the increasingly poor conditions will make it hard to get home safely. We also strongly encourage parents to arrange a ride for their child if winds are at an extremely high speed, and their child typically walks home. This is due to the possibility of their child being injured by loose items flying around outside.

- **Can I keep my child home if school is open, when I believe it is in the best interest for my child to remain home?**

Yes, please understand that as Superintendent of Moscow School District, I make the decision whether school is open or closed based on the conditions that will affect the school day. However, you as a parent ultimately can decide whether your child attends school or not. Our district has a 90% attendance requirement, which means that your child has a limit of 9 days per semester that can be missed. Please use them wisely.

I understand we may disagree on the decision to keep school open or closed during questionable weather conditions. With so many families impacted you can understand there is minimal chance of pleasing everyone. In the early dark hours of the morning, I truly understand the impact this decision is to all the stakeholders in our school and community. If you disagree, then please make the decision you believe is correct for your family, as safety above all is our number one priority.

Sincerely,

*Gregory J. Bailey, Ph.D.*  
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