

Making the Weather Call

Part of my responsibilities as school superintendent includes making the decision to delay or cancel school. This is never easy as I consider the impact of these decisions for many of our families, especially those with young children who need childcare provisions. Many of our parents have reliable contingency plans, including the use of extended family and siblings; others utilize older students in their neighborhoods. Some, however, have no one to help with their young children, and consequently lose compensation for lost work opportunities. Inevitably, many are inconvenienced with school delays and cancellations, which I sincerely regret.

Ultimately, however, we place the safety of our students as the primary reason to delay or cancel school. To check on weather and road conditions, Bill Redmon, Greenfield-Central Transportation Director, and I begin driving our roads at 5 A.M. We also routinely exchange information with city and county highway departments as well as with police and sheriff departments to help make the decision. Because many of our buses are well into their routes by 6 A.M., we must make the decision to delay or cancel school by 5:45 A.M. Inevitably, we do our best to make informed decisions before placing buses, student drivers, and employees on our roads. This is not easy because road conditions can vary significantly from neighborhood to neighborhood, as well as by the hour, within our school district.

How can parents learn if Greenfield-Central has a delay or cancellation? Last year the Board approved the use of the Honeywell emergency notification system, where families can receive text, email, and/or phone messages to notify them about delays and cancellations. We also routinely call television channels 6, 8, 13 and FOX 59 as early as possible. Other sources of information include the radio stations WRGF, WFMS, WIBC, and WQME. Finally, parents may check out our school website at www.gcsc.k12.in.us, where we post weather related information as well. We ask, however, that parents not call schools to confirm delays and cancellations, as this works to clog information systems needed for emergency purposes.

Dr. Linda Gellert
Superintendent of Schools