2018-2019 Weather Related Delays and Closings

Frequently Asked Questions

The Plum Borough School District’s first priority is to keep our students and staff safe. We value each and every life under our care. With this consideration, calling delays and cancellations are taken very seriously. We will always work diligently to keep the lives and futures of our students in the forefront of all decisions and their execution.

Please keep in mind that we are also cognizant that when a cancellation or a delay occurs, we are impacting childcare plans, work-related commitments of our families and more. We also recognize there are families who have a more expansive view on cancellations due to inclement weather. We will do our best to make any decision to delay or close schools, a decision(s) based on the facts as we know them and when we know them. Below is a list of frequently asked questions regarding snow delays and school closings.

How are parents and residents alerted to a delay or closing?

- An automated call will occur if you have updated information in our Sapphire Community Portal Student Information System
- Television/Radio stations: KDKA, WPXI, WTAE
- Plum Borough School District Website www.pbsd.net
- Facebook www.facebook.com/PlumBoroughSchoolDistrict
- Twitter https://twitter.com/plumboroughsd

How is a delay or closing determined?

A variety of resources are used to gather information before making a decision. Local news
stations, weather alerts from the National Oceanic Atmospheric Association (NOAA) and the Pittsburgh Office of the National Weather Service (NOA) are monitored for rapidly changing weather patterns and storm predictions. Both our Transportation and Facilities Departments work closely with the Plum Borough Department of Public Works, road crews, and Police assist the District in determining road safety. Road safety includes snow and ice accumulation, washed out roads, fallen trees, downed power lines, traffic accidents, etc. Weather and road conditions are also checked the night previous to any anticipated adverse weather condition, starting at approximately 2:00 am. Communications between all parties occur throughout the night and are in full operation by 4:30 am.

**What factors are included in the decision?**

The decision to delay or close school is more than snowfall accumulation. Bus stop safety, walking routes, an ability to clear and maintain school parking lots and sidewalks, building heat and power, traffic accidents, ice, temperature, and other forms of precipitation are additional factors we consider.

**What is the timeline for a delay or a school closing?**

We attempt to adhere to our guidelines; however, Western Pennsylvania weather is unpredictable and often erratic. The PBS Decision timeline for delays and closures is between 5:00 am - 5:30 am. If a decision to move from a delay to a closure is needed, it would occur by 8:00 am.

*If the decision to delay or close is made the evening prior, notification will occur no later than 10:45 pm.

**What time does school start and when does the bus arrive when we are delayed?**

We operate on a two-hour delay schedule. Adding two (2) hours to your regular bus stop and school start times will allow you to plan accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Delayed Start Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHS</td>
<td>7:28 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:28 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oblock</td>
<td>8:05 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:05 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP</td>
<td>8:15 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:15 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Center/Pivik</td>
<td>8:55 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:55 am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*What happens with Kindergarten students if we are delayed?*

If a two-hour delay is called, morning Kindergarten will be canceled. Afternoon Kindergarten will proceed normally.

**Does the School District delay or close for cold weather?**

There is no set temperature that would cause a District to close. Several Districts in our area consider cold weather delays with single-digit temperatures and a double-digit negative wind chill factor. As a general rule of thumb, a *wind chill warning* (15 degrees below or colder) would require a decision to be made on whether to delay or close our schools. Delaying school instead of closing due to cold weather is also logical if there is a prediction that the temperature is expected to increase significantly by the time students are waiting at the bus stop.

**Other local Districts are delayed or closed, why are we open?**

Weather conditions vary throughout Western Pennsylvania, and our decision is based on Plum Boro’s road conditions and the ability to maintain District school operations. Please keep in mind that you do have the right to make a decision based on your belief, for your child(ren) to maintain your child’s safety.

**If the District is closed, are after-school activities canceled?**

Yes. If we decide that the best course of action is to close our schools, ALL after-school activities are canceled within the Plum Borough School District. However, the District reserves the right to permit activities to go forward on a case by case basis and depending on weather conditions at that time. Each District building will notify participants if events are to continue as scheduled.

**Is breakfast served when school is delayed?**

No.

**What if my student is transported to an out of District school or placement?**

All Plum Borough School District transportation services will follow the decision of the Plum Borough School District for both delays and cancellations.

**What should I do if I know a student does not have adequate outerwear for the winter weather?**
Please contact the building principal or guidance counselor if you believe a student is in need of winter clothing.

**If Pennsylvania declares a state of emergency do we have to make up the school day?**

Under PA School Code Section 2523, all students must attend 180 school days and receive no less than 990 hours of instruction per year in the secondary level and 900 hours per year in the elementary levels. Plum builds in make-up days within its academic calendars. If a school or school district is unable to make-up a school closure, they must request an exception to the 180-day attendance requirement and justify the reason. The reason must include why the make-up day cannot be added to the end of the school year in June. Depending on when a cancellation occurs, will impact the day that will be used to make up the day. The District will communicate via our website(s) the makeup day(s) if necessary within 48 hours from school closing to our school community.

**Should inclement weather strike during the school day, what are the procedures for early dismissals during the school day?**

It is very unlikely the District will dismiss students early. In our experience, it is better to keep students in school until roads are passable rather than sending students home to the possibility of an empty house. This is especially a concern with our elementary students. Should we need to dismiss early, parents will be notified through all communication avenues; Television/Radio stations, Plum Borough School District Website, Plum Connect, and social media outlets.

We thank you for your continued support.