

ISD 279-OSSEO AREA SCHOOLS

SEVERE WEATHER & EMERGENCY INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Generally, you can expect that school will be held, even in severe weather. If you disagree with the district's decision to hold school on a day you believe the weather is hazardous, you may keep your child home. Please call your school's absence line to report the absence. The absence will be excused.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION AND EARLY DISMISSAL

School Cancellation

District administrators consider the combined effects of snow, ice, and wind chill when determining if school will be held. If the National Weather Service predicts the wind chill to remain at or drop below -35°F (below zero), school may be cancelled. Administrators attempt to make the decision by 5:30 a.m. after surveying conditions, monitoring weather reports, and consulting with transportation vendors.

Early Release/Dismissal

Early releases are very unlikely, due to the complexity of student transportation. However, if a storm worsens during the day, the superintendent may decide to close school early. Staff would attempt to make such a decision by 11 a.m.

- **Mid-day dismissal:** Lunch may be served and schools will be released in normal order, so older siblings are home first to await younger brothers/sisters.
- **Tornado warning or other severe weather:** Buses will not be loaded and students will remain at school.

Programs, Activities, Events

When schools close, all after-school and evening activities and programs are generally cancelled, as well, including extra-curricular activities and community education programs (youth/adult classes; preschool and Kidstop programs; adult basic education; early childhood). Privately sponsored activities scheduled through the school district's facilities reservation department are also cancelled. The Kidstop Family Handbook describes pick-up procedures related to early dismissals.

No Late Starts

Due to the complexity of student transportation (e.g., students coming from other districts for magnet schools, homeless student transportation, and transportation to out-of-district special education programs), Osseo Area Schools does not offer two-hour late starts.

COMMUNICATIONS

If school is cancelled or dismissed early, we will inform you as follows:

- **Telephone/email:** We will call and/or email you using an automated messaging system. Please be sure to submit or update your contact information through your child's school.
- **Online:** Whenever possible, emergency information will be posted on the district's website—www.district279.org—and the district's Facebook page—www.facebook.com/OsseoSchools.
- **Broadcast:** Information will be submitted to major radio and TV stations as "Osseo District 279."

Please do not call your child's school with questions during an emergency. The phone lines must remain open for emergency communications. If you need assistance, call the main district phone number: 763-391-7000.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

- **School emergency plan for your family:** Make sure your children know what to do if school is cancelled. Do they know how to get into your home safely if school closes early?
- **Student emergency contact information at school:** Students will be released only to parents, guardians and authorized individuals listed on the student emergency cards kept in at school. Please keep this information current.
- **Weather-appropriate clothing:** Please send your child to school dressed appropriately for the weather, e.g. warm coat, mittens, hat, and/or boots. Your child will be expected to go outdoors when outdoor recess is held. The school principal will determine whether to hold outdoor recess when the weather is questionable.

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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Osseo Area Schools has a comprehensive emergency plan developed with the help of local law enforcement, emergency management, and public health officials. Drills are routinely held in all district buildings to prepare students and employees for emergencies.

The emergency plan is based on an “all-hazard” approach that incorporates five universal response actions that can be implemented quickly. In the rare event of an emergency, the school principal or a district administrator will implement one of the following actions as needed:

1. **Evacuation:** All students and staff will exit the building. If the school grounds are not safe, students may be relocated to another site.
2. **Reverse Evacuation*:** All students and staff will move into the building. Exterior doors and windows will be locked and public access to the school will be temporarily suspended.
3. **Severe Weather Shelter:** All students and staff will be moved to designated shelter areas within the building. If severe weather strikes during dismissal, buses may be delayed.
4. **Shelter-in-Place:** All students and staff will move into the building. Windows will be closed and ventilation systems will be temporarily disabled to keep out contaminants.
5. **Lockdown*:** All students and staff will secure their areas by locking doors and windows. Public access to the school will be temporarily suspended.

* During a reverse evacuation or lockdown, building access will be restricted to the public, including parents. Once the emergency response action has been lifted, you will be allowed to enter the building.