

Emergency School Closing Information

Emergency Closing Center

The Merrillville Community School Corporation's first priority is the safety of our students and personnel. We encourage you to have a plan in place for school delays, cancellations, and emergency dismissal situations.

Many factors go into the decision to close or delay the opening of school. It is important for you to know the process.

Monitoring Current Conditions & Forecasts: Merrillville school personnel continually monitor forecasts and live radar. Depending on the certainty of weather conditions, the call to close or delay school may be made the prior evening.

Personnel on the Street: Merrillville school personnel (Director of Transportation and Director of Maintenance) will drive assigned areas of Ross Township to determine actual road conditions and be in contact with city, county, and state transportation departments. They begin the process early when bad weather is expected. The roads are continually assessed for safety, and we remain in contact with city, county, and state transportation departments. If by 6:00 am the roads are favorable or will be favorable and conditions are expected to be good to get the students safely to school, then school will be open.

Ability to Clear Pathways: Merrillville Community School Corporation also factors in our ability to clear school sidewalks and parking lots in a timely manner, or if snow will accumulate faster than we can clear.

Visibility: Fog and blowing snow are also factors in a delay or cancellation.

Considerations:

- Merrillville Community School Corporation respects a parent's determination regarding their child's attendance at school during inclement weather and the school will respect the parent's decision to keep their child at home. Parents are expected to contact the school and inform school officials of their determination. The students will be counted as absent, per state code, and students will be given an opportunity to complete their academic work in the same manner as an excused absence from school.
- Merrillville Community School Corporation understands all parents are committed to keeping children safe therefore, we ask parents to help their children dress appropriately for the weather when sending the children to school.

Delaying or Closing School is based on Multiple Variables

Freezing Rain/Sleet

- When freezing rain/sleet are predicted, the decision regarding school is delayed until the latest possible time in an effort to observe the most current and local conditions. Such a decision is made to ensure the safety of students.

Snowfall

- The variation in actual snowfall compared to predicted snowfall impacts the decision whether school is delayed or closed. Such a decision, except in extreme situations, will generally be made in the morning.

Extreme Cold

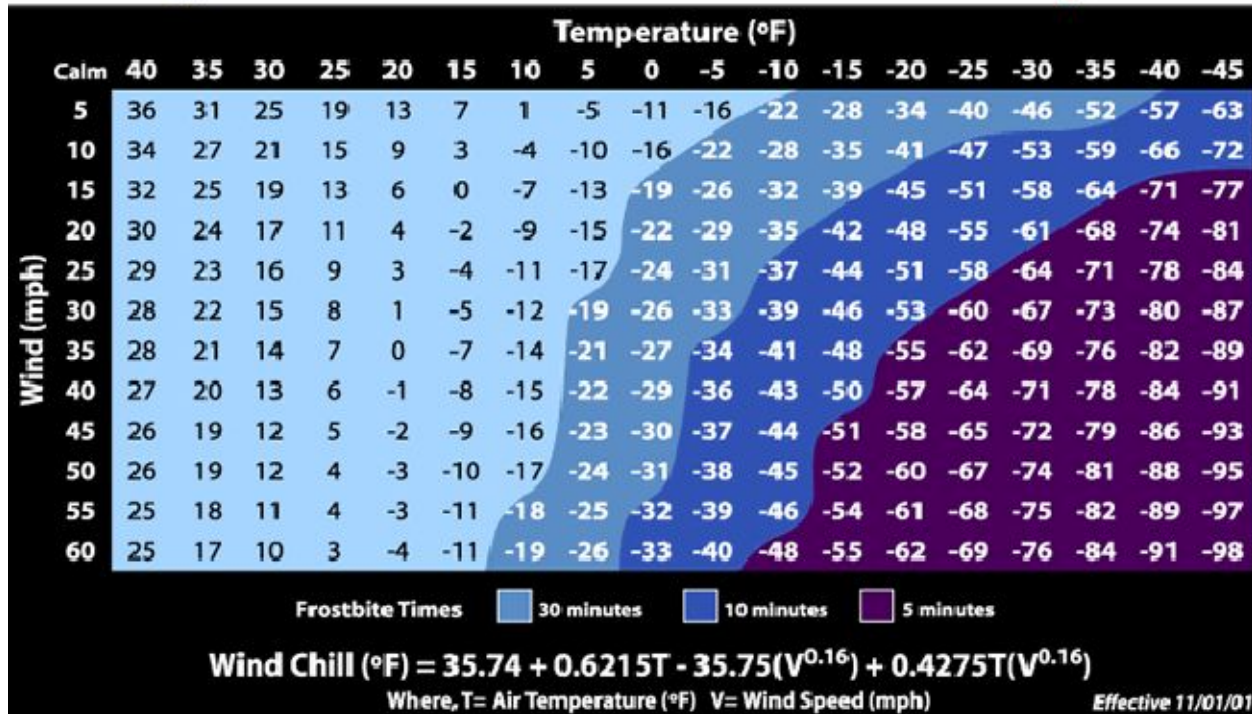
- Merrillville Community School Corporation uses the hourly temperature predictions for its zip code from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (noaa.gov). If air temperature is predicted by NOAA to be -20 degrees or below real feel temperature (the combination of the temperature and wind chill factor), the school will consider a two-hour delay for the start of school. If the air temperature is predicted to remain at -20 degrees or below a delay may turn into a closing. Also, if the actual air temperature is predicted to be -20 or below, the school will consider closing. Such a determination will be made as early as possible.

Monitoring Temperatures

- We use the National Weather Service Wind Chill Chart displayed below for assessing temperatures and wind chill when considering a school closure or delay.



NWS Windchill Chart



Delayed Start

In order to provide time for roads and weather conditions to improve and become safer for travel, Merrillville Community School Corporation may use a delayed start of school.

A delayed start to school allows the school district to do the following:

1. Provide more time to assess for safe conditions to start school including roads, buildings, and transportation.
2. Project whether a closure of school is needed.
3. Allow school to be held with improved conditions and not have to make up a weather day because of a school closure.
 - If a two-hour delay is called **lunch will be served.**
 - The following schedule for classes will be used.
 - **Merrillville High School will start at 9:45 a.m.**
 - **Pierce Middle School will start at 9:40 a.m.**
 - **Merrillville Intermediate School will start at 9:55 a.m.**
 - **Elementary Schools will start at 9:55 a.m.**

*When riding a bus, please catch the bus two hours later than you normally would.

School Cancellation

All Merrillville Community School Corporation schools will be cancelled. This includes all after-school events, meetings, and practices. Athletes should verify practice cancellations with the Athletic Department as there are exceptions for some practices. Exceptions may occur on a case by case basis with approval by the Superintendent if the emergency situation no longer exists. The state of Indiana requires 180 student days. Please refer to the school calendar regarding make-up days. Additionally, Merrillville Community School Corporation will communicate these dates with you on our school website, Facebook, and Twitter.

Emergency Closings and Delays

In the event of inclement weather or other conditions, notifications regarding delays and closures may be obtained from the following:

Radio

WAKE (1500am), INDIANA (105.5fm), WZVN (107.1fm), WGN (720am), WBBM (780am)

Television CBS (Channel 2), NBC (Channel 5), ABC (Channel 7), WGN (Channel 9), FOX (Channel 32), CLTV, Lakeshore Public TV

Internet

Merrillville Community School Corporation Website: Information will be posted; please make sure to refresh your web browser each time you check. Information is also posted on Facebook and Twitter.

You can also go to cancellations.com or emergencyclosings.com to find closing or delay information. These sites offer the opportunity to sign up for web alerts. The alerts can be to any email you provide.

Phone

School Messenger Notification System: Parents can control what numbers are contacted in an emergency through Skyward under the Skylerts tab. Please ensure that your contact information is updated.

[Emergency Closing Center](#)

Address:

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