

EMERGENCY AND WEATHER-RELATED SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS



Because of unforeseen emergencies, usually related to the weather, school may be closed for the day, may have a delayed opening or, under very rare circumstances, school may be dismissed early. This is a reminder to parents to make alternative child care arrangements well in advance of such occurrences. We are also writing to remind you that listening to the weather forecast is the first step in any plan. If the forecast indicates the possibility of a delay or closing, you should listen to the radio (WBZ AM 1030), or watch television (Channel 4, Channel 5, Channel 7, Channel 25), or check online notices at www.masconomet.org. Sometimes a radio station or TV channel does not air our announcement despite the fact that we have called it in. Also, there is a lag time between notifying media and the appearance of the notice on the air. If you do not hear an announcement for the Masconomet Regional School District when other area districts are listed, you should check another station or channel or check the web site. When time and technology permits, the Superintendent will send a broadcast voice message to all student families and staff members indicating a closing or delay. Do not rely on this notice. Check TV, radio, and the District web site. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for the earliest notice. Facebook and Twitter links are at the bottom of the District web page.

People often ask how decisions are made regarding school delays and closures. With regard to weather-related emergencies, the Superintendent makes the ultimate decision. Consultations are made with Public Safety and other departments in the three towns. The Superintendent monitors weather and road conditions to gauge not only if students can safely be transported to school, but also if they can be returned home again.

When the emergency is weather related, the process begins around 4:00 a.m. A preliminary decision must be made by approximately 5:30 a.m. because notification has to be given to radio stations, television stations, police, employees, food service, bus contractors, area districts, and others. If possible, a delayed opening of 2 hours is the preferred option. Conditions may be sufficiently hazardous or may deteriorate, however, requiring school to be cancelled. After a delayed opening notice, continue to monitor for changes.

Other types of emergencies may require immediate evacuation and dismissal. This can be quite frustrating for working parents who must make child care arrangements, but delaying or closing school is a complicated decision involving many factors. It is not taken lightly because of the impact on so many people. The ultimate deciding factors are the safety of the students and the educational program. We appreciate your understanding when such decisions must be made.

The Superintendent must make a decision based on all students in the District. Sometimes individual parents may want to exercise their own judgment regarding their children. In this case, they may decide to keep their children home or sign their children out before the school day ends. In addition, parents must weigh the advisability of having inexperienced student drivers behind the wheel when bad weather is forecast.

Transportation schedules can also be affected. Weather and road conditions often cause delays for pick-ups and drop-offs at bus stops. Buses are subject to the same conditions that plague commuters who travel by car, train or airplane.

As always, your understanding and patience are greatly appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin M. Lyons".

Kevin M. Lyons
Superintendent of Schools

School Emergency or Severe Weather

- Check Radio and Television Stations
- Closing and Delays Will Be Announced first at www.masconomet.org
- Have a Family Plan for School Closings and Delays

For the most current information in a school emergency, go to [www. Masconomet.org](http://www.Masconomet.org)