

USD 497 INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

When will school schedule changes be announced?

The district will make announcements by 10 p.m. the preceding night, whenever possible, or by 6 a.m. No announcement is made if schools are in session as scheduled.

Who makes the decision?

You! Parents may choose to keep their children home for health and safety reasons. Please notify your child's school of this decision.

The superintendent confers with other administrators and the district's student transportation provider and makes decisions based upon safety, current weather conditions, forecasts, and the condition of roads, sidewalks, and school parking lots.

How do I find out about schedule changes?

The district sends automated phone/email messages to staff and school families. Call 785/832-5000, or visit www.usd497.org, @usd497 on Twitter, or Lawrence Public Schools on Facebook. Area media also announce closings. If there is no announcement, it is likely school is in session.

How is a Two-Hour Delayed Start Managed?

When unsafe weather conditions require the district to delay the start of school by two hours, buses will pick up students at their regular bus stop two hours after the regularly scheduled time.



If a child normally catches the bus at 6:45 a.m., for example, the pick-up time on a two-hour delayed schedule is 8:45 a.m. Likewise, schools open two hours after their regularly scheduled start time.

Any before-school care, practices, activities, or zero-hour classes will be canceled. A cold breakfast will be served two hours later than your school's regularly scheduled serving time. School lunch will be available as usual and school dismissal times remain the same.

While school administrators report to school at the regularly scheduled time, teachers and staff will not be on duty until 15 minutes before school begins. As a result, schools cannot provide supervision for students prior to the start of school. Custodians report to work at the direction of the Facilities and Operations Department. The District Office will open at 9:30 a.m.

Safety is the primary focus when a determination is made to close schools or to delay the start of school by two hours. A delayed start may allow temperatures to warm, storms to pass, morning fog to lift, and/or roads, sidewalks, and parking lots to be cleared.

Who's on duty when schools are closed?

Only staff who are performing weather-related or time-sensitive tasks at the direction of their supervisor are on duty when schools are closed

Schools cannot provide child care when buildings are closed.

What happens if the weather worsens during the school day?

The district tries to avoid unexpected early dismissals. On occasion, early dismissal is unavoidable. Parents should make prior arrangements for supervision of their children.

It is important for schools to be able to reach parents and designated child care providers during daytime hours. Please make sure to give your child's school current phone numbers and emergency contact information.

When it is necessary to dismiss children early during a regular school day, the district will contact parents and area media outlets. If weather conditions worsen and schools remain open, parents may choose to pick up their children early after informing school staff.

What cold weather provisions are made for elementary recess?

Elementary recess is held indoors if the temperature or wind chill falls below 15 degrees. Children should always wear appropriate clothing, including winter coats, hats, gloves or mittens, and boots during cold-weather months.