



Daniel E. Gutekanst, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

December 2020

During the 2020-21 school year it is the goal of the superintendent to hold in person learning whenever possible during school days in which inclement weather is forecast. The key consideration when winter weather is predicted is the ability of students and staff to get to and from school buildings safely.

Parents and students should expect that an announcement about a **School Cancellation**, **School Delay**, a **Remote Learning Day**, or **Emergency Early Release** will be made only after the superintendent consults with public safety officials, reviews the latest weather forecasts from the National Weather Service, and inspects road conditions in Greater Boston and Needham. Typically, inclement weather announcements for cancellations, delays, or remote learning are made between approximately 5:00 and 6:00 a.m. on the morning of a weather event and not the evening before unless it is abundantly clear that a major storm will impact the ability to open schools safely. Families and students will need to plan accordingly and be flexible and patient enough to await a morning decision and announcement.

School Cancellation

Given our ability during the 2020-21 school year to continue to access learning from home through the use of technology, it is expected that a School Cancellation will be rare. However, if a storm is predicted to or may result in local or widespread power outages that may hinder technology-based teaching and learning or the school buildings lack power, heat, or other essential services, the superintendent may cancel all classes for all students; in these extreme circumstances, the school day will need to be made up in June.

The Needham Public Schools will utilize an emergency notification system that will contact family home phones, cell phones, and send an email using the information families have updated in PowerSchool. The "No School" announcement will also be carried by television channels 4, 5, 7, 10, and FOX25, and local cable. Information regarding schools during inclement weather is also prominently displayed on the Needham Public Schools' website www.needham.k12.ma.us. The quickest way to find

out is on Twitter where the information will also be posted. (For more info: https://twitter.com/@NPS_Supt)

- All classes and school activities will be canceled for the day, including scheduled adult evening classes, before and after school programs, including Needham Extended Day Program (NEDP), and other school-based activities.
- Transportation of students to out-of-district schools will be canceled on Needham's "No School" days.
- *Transportation of students to out-of-district schools will also be canceled on remote learning days.*

Parents may opt out of the emergency notification system for weather related events only:

1. Please log on to **PowerSchool** and click on Update Information.
2. On the Student Data Update page, delete the telephone number in the field marked *Weather Related School Delays/Cancellations Phone*.
3. You will receive calls for other school emergencies. Alternatively, you may change the number in that box to a phone number more convenient to you and your family.
4. Contact the school secretary if you have a problem with your PowerSchool account.

School Delay

If the Department of Public Works needs extra time to plow or sand the streets to assure safety, the start of the school day will be delayed by two hours. Under this alternative plan the following will occur:

- Remote Learning Academy students will continue with their regular schedule: no delay.
- Students in the hybrid program learning from home that day will have a two hour delay.
- Schools will be dismissed at their regular times.
- Lunch will be served at the regular times in all school cafeterias and at remote meal pick-up sites.
- Preschool a.m. sessions will be canceled.
- Needham Extended Day Program (NEDP) before-school program will be closed; all after-school programs will be open.

On delayed opening days, school will begin:

Broadmeadow	10:20
Eliot	10:20
Mitchell	10:20
Newman	10:45
Sunita Williams	10:20

High Rock	9:40
Pollard	9:50
Needham High School	10:00
Preschool	12:30 (afternoon students only)

Remote Learning Day

In the event of inclement weather, it is most likely that school will continue through remote learning (except as outlined above). If the conditions warrant closing all school buildings and implementing a Remote Learning Day for all students, the same announcement procedures as outlined above will be implemented. Furthermore, the school year will not need to be extended in June whenever a Remote Learning Day is announced for students and staff. There will be no remote lunch pick-up on an inclement-weather remote learning day.

Transportation of students to out-of-district schools will also be canceled on remote learning days.

Emergency Early Release

In the event of a severe weather emergency or some other emergency that develops during the school day, the Needham Public Schools may release students before the end of the school day. We will use the emergency notification system to alert parents and guardians. As appropriate, the Needham Public Schools will work with public safety officials to shelter students we are unable to send home.