

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent

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Ms. Alisha DiCorpo
Interim Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

Occasionally there are inquiries about procedures for closing schools due to inclement weather.

1. How is the decision made to delay, dismiss early or close schools?

Decisions regarding school closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals are made by the Superintendent in consultation with the local police and highway departments, the school bus company, and area weather forecasters. The first consideration in making these decisions is student safety.

Road conditions are obviously a critical factor when making the decision and it is a difficult determination even when considering experienced car and bus drivers. **For high school drivers, please use your judgment as parents about whether your son/daughter should drive in inclement weather. If there is any doubt, please have them take the bus.**

2. How do I find out if schools are closed or delayed?

A variety of communication tools are used to announce any change to the district's regular schedule. The [School Delays and Closings page](#) of the district website provides a complete listing and information to register where necessary. These tools include:

New Milford Public Schools website: Notification of school delays, closings and early dismissal are posted on the district's homepage at www.newmilfordps.org. Parents are also encouraged to sign up for email notification through www.ctweather.com by selecting "e-Notifications." There is a link to this site on the school district's website.

Text message and Twitter alerts: Text message and twitter announcements go out as soon as a decision is made to delay or close school or in the event of early dismissal. **Telephone notification follows later, around 6:00 a.m.**

TV: Channel 3 (WFSB) Channel 6/NBC 30 (WVIT) Channel 8 (WTNH) FOX61 (WTIC)

Sometimes there are technical difficulties with websites, email or the media. If in doubt, please check multiple sources.

3. How are delayed openings handled?

Morning decisions about **delayed openings** are usually made between 4:45 a.m. and 5:30 a.m. based on road conditions and weather forecasts available at that hour. Decisions must be made at that point because the first school buses begin their morning runs shortly after 6:00 a.m.

This year, depending on the weather forecast, we will use either a **TWO HOUR** or a **THREE HOUR** delayed opening. The notification will clearly state which schedule will be used.

School Start Times with a TWO HOUR Delayed Opening:

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School	9:35 a.m.
Sarah Noble Intermediate, Northville and Hill & Plain Elementary Schools	10:50 a.m.

School Start Times with a THREE HOUR Delayed Opening:

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School	10:35 a.m.
Sarah Noble Intermediate, Northville and Hill & Plain Elementary Schools	11:50 a.m.

Morning EXCEL classes are canceled when there is any delayed opening.

If the weather does not improve during the delay period, a decision to close school for the day may be made. Parents and guardians should check the district website and TV stations listed above until the delay period has passed in order to make sure that school will be in session. A text message and twitter alert update will also be sent.

4. How am I notified in the event of an early dismissal?

The district will use all the tools referenced above. In addition, parents will be notified using the **School Messenger** system. The district will use this **automated calling system to notify parents in the event of an unscheduled early dismissal**. This service allows us to send a voice mail message to all parents within minutes.

Decisions about **early dismissal** due to weather problems are usually made during the morning and announced between **9:45 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.** During weather related early dismissals, students are dismissed two hours and 15 minutes early. **Afternoon EXCEL Pre-K classes are canceled when early dismissal occurs.**

School Dismissal Times with an Early Dismissal:

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School	12:00 p.m.
Sarah Noble Intermediate, Northville and Hill & Plain Elementary Schools	1:00 p.m.

Morning EXCEL students go home at their usual time of 11:15 a.m.

An **Accelerated Early Dismissal** may be called when a storm happens unexpectedly or is anticipated to arrive between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. If this should occur, the school messenger call will reference “**accelerated early dismissal**” as part of the message.

Accelerated Early Dismissal Times:

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School	11:00 a.m.
Sarah Noble Intermediate, Northville and Hill & Plain Elementary Schools	12:00 p.m.

On a day when an accelerated early dismissal is called, morning EXCEL students will be dismissed at 12:00 p.m. with the elementary schools.

The ability to deliver a message is only as successful as the contact information that we have for your child, therefore, please make certain that your child’s school has the most up-to-date direct dial numbers. This information is updated annually at the beginning of the school year. If your information changes after the annual update, please let your child’s school know immediately.

5. What about school sponsored events (concerts, athletics, special events and afterschool activities) on days when school is dismissed early or closed?

All school sponsored events are canceled if school is closed or dismissed early.

Guidance to School Districts Regarding Closures due to Snow

The State Department of Education recently released guidance to school districts on closures due to snow. These days can be considered remote learning days, which will count towards our total number of required school days. Our total number of days must be equal to or exceed 177 school days this year. This guidance is for the 2020-2021 school year only. In circumstances where the storm causes widespread power outages and remote learning is not possible, students will have an “old fashioned” snow day and the day will not count towards the annual total.

When a remote day is called due to snow, the Interim Superintendent’s message will state that the day will be a remote learning day for students and staff. This message will also be displayed on our website. We will continue to alert news stations as well. Each station is working on a remote learning/snow message for districts to use. After the call is made and messages are sent, prior to the start of the school day, building principals will send out the daily schedule to all families via email. Parents/guardians received a copy of our remote schedules last week. This will be the same schedule we will use each time we go out on remote. The copy of the schedule will be the same each time, but will be sent as a reminder to parents/guardians and caregivers.

If there is to be a two or a three hour delay, schools will operate on the hybrid schedule, with the time of the delay reflected in the grade level schedule. Building principals will also launch each version of the schedule prior to the start of school, once the delay is called and posted on the website, news stations and when the call is made via School Messenger. If you are an in-person learner that day, you will come to school in person following the delay schedule. Remote learners will follow the delay schedule at home.

As a reminder, the state requires that student attendance be taken. Students must be in school, even when remote, for at least four hours for their day to be counted as a school day. Attendance will be taken in the afternoon of each remote and delay day.

It is imperative that students and staff take home their devices and any materials necessary for the next school day every day so that we are ready for any event that may come about this year. We are grateful for your continued support as we navigate these challenging situations. Please feel free to contact your child’s building administrator should you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



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