

February 9, 2019

Dear Viking Nation Families,

This letter is being sent to you in an effort to help communicate about *snow day* cancellations, how our district determines when school must be cancelled, how many days we have used this year, how many make-up days are needed and how our local district plans to meet the state mandate for schools as required in the Revised School Code (MCL 380.10).

While many of us attended school in various types of weather and road conditions “back in the day,” to do so now is not always practical or acceptable. I am also very aware of the stress that school cancellations can put on a family, especially in regards to childcare when parents must work even if school is not in session. Therefore, the decision to cancel classes for our district is not ever taken lightly, yet, the safety of our students and staff is always foremost when contemplating a school closure. I have been asked various times about how that decision is made and if I might share that with families. In case you’ve ever wondered here are the steps:

1. There is consideration of what types of weather advisories or warnings have been issued for our area the night before or that morning by the National Weather Service
2. Driving my own personal vehicle on the bus routes early in the morning - usually around 4:30am. I do this if there is fog, snow, ice etc. While main roads may be plowed and/or in suitable driving condition, secondary and gravel roads where our buses travel may not be. I also take into consideration that we have students who drive to school and do not have a lot of experience driving in hazardous conditions. The degree of ease or struggle I experience driving my car weighs heavily on the decision.
3. Consultation with Tuscola County area Superintendents and Transportation Directors
4. Once road conditions are determined, I contact bus drivers by 5:30am to give them either a “roads condition” report or to let them know if school has been cancelled.
5. Finally, I contact the Principals, send out a text/phone blast to the Viking Families and then post the closing on various TV stations.

Per MCL 380.10 public schools must be in session 180-days and 1098-clock hours and 75% student attendance on instructional days - all three requirements must be met to receive necessary funding for school operations. Schools have a total of 6-days that can be “forgiven” for circumstances beyond our control (such as weather) that can be used in the event school is cancelled. An additional 3-days may be granted by the state if a district can prove they have no other means to make up the days over the standard 6-days allotted. So far, we have used 12-days which, as you know is 6 more than allowed (and we still have a lot of winter to go!). Any way you look at it, we have to make-up instructional school days.

While we do plan to file a waiver for the additional 3-days, it is not a guarantee we will receive them.

Therefore, to give families an opportunity to plan, school will be in session:

Friday, March 1 - full day

Monday, April 22 - full day

Tuesday - Friday, May 28-May 31 - full days

If we are granted the 3-additional days and there are no other school cancellations, the days in May will be adjusted

ONLY in the event that more school cancellations might be necessary than the above dates cover,

June's schedule would be adjusted to the following:

Thursday, June 6 - full day

Friday, June 7 - ½ day

Thursday, June 13 - full day

Friday, June 14 - ½ day

Thursday, June 20 - full day

Friday, June 21 - ½ day

Thank you for your understanding. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me 989.693.6163

Go Green! Go White!

Go Vikings!

Diane Foster, Superintendent
Akron-Fairgrove Schools