



A Note From Our Superintendent

Southeast Polk Ram Family,

December is here and, as we saw on Monday, so is the snow. While we don't know exactly what this winter has in store for us, it is a safe bet that it will include more snow, ice, and cold temperatures. With that comes the possibility of school delays or cancellations.

The decision to cancel school is rarely an easy one. It's something we put a lot of thought into and take very seriously at Southeast Polk. There is no specific formula for making this decision. As we all know, Iowa weather can be very unpredictable. We also know that changing schedules can be burdensome for families who then have to juggle childcare and work. This newsletter contains information regarding the procedures associated with delaying or canceling school.

The decision-making process involves collecting data from many different sources and input from many different people. Typically, a decision will be made no later than 5:30 a.m. regarding whether to delay the start of the school day by two hours or cancel school altogether. The safety of our students and staff is always the deciding factor in our decision.

Ultimately, we encourage students to attend school every day we are in session. However, we understand that circumstances may differ for each student and family. We respect the decisions parents make regarding the safety of their child(ren) and whether to send them to school during winter weather conditions. We just ask that you communicate this with your student's school.

Sincerely,

Dirk Halupnik

In the case of a delay or cancellation, please use the following guidelines.

	Two Hour Delay	Cancellation
Little Rams Preschool	AM Canceled	Canceled
Kids Klub (Before/After)	Opens 2 Hours Later	Closed
High School Activities	AM activities Canceled	Activities Canceled pending ongoing weather
Junior High Activities	AM activities Canceled	Activities Canceled
Middle School Activities	AM activities Canceled	Activities Canceled
Elementary Activities	AM activities Canceled	Activities Canceled

Inclement Weather FAQ's

What factors determine a canceled school day?

Ultimately, it is the overall safety of our students and staff that drives the determination. Some of the data collected to help make the decision includes:

Temperature	Precipitation	Timing of the weather events
Visibility	Forecasts	Ability of buses to operate safely
Road conditions	Severity of the weather	Ability to functionally operate our buildings

Who is involved in the decision of a school cancellation and what do they do?

- Superintendent
 - monitors the entire situation, including roads, buses, and buildings; communicates with the National Weather Service, Iowa DOT, Polk County, and other local school districts; and makes the final decision
- Transportation Director
 - monitors roads and the bus fleet, communicates with drivers
- Buildings and Grounds Director
 - monitors roads, parking lots, buildings; coordinates plowing and sand/salt application; and communicates with Buildings and Grounds staff
- Technology Director
 - directs the communication process (website, texts, calls, etc...)
- Superintendent's Executive Assistant
 - contacts media and community groups

Where to find information on school delays or cancellations:

Radio	Television
WHO (1040AM)	WOI (Channel 5)
KISS (107.5FM)	KCCI (Channel 8)
The Bus (100.3FM)	WHO (Channel 13)
KJJY (92.5FM)	KDSM FX (Channel 17)
KGGO (94.9FM)	KCWI (Channel 23)
The Hawk (97.3FM)	Other
ALT (1063AM)	Des Moines Register
KXNO (1460AM)	www.southeastpolk.org
	www.facebook.com/SEPSchools

What is the main difference between deciding on a full cancellation versus a two-hour late start?

- The timing of the storm event and the time needed to prepare to safely open our buildings and run our bus routes.
- If the decision is made to delay the beginning of the school day, conditions may change enough to warrant cancellation. The decision to cancel school following a decision to delay will usually be made by 6:30 a.m. and no later than 7:00 a.m.

How long does it take to communicate the decision to cancel school to stakeholders?

The whole communications process takes about 10 minutes once started – we try not to send the texts/calls before 5:30 am.

Announcements/notifications will be made through the news media, social media, and the district's emergency notification system through Infinite Campus (voice call & text message).