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October 11, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Time has come to talk about snow...snow days that is! Here is a friendly reminder of how Region 14 makes decisions about delays and closings due to inclement weather.

### HOW DO WE MAKE THE DECISION?

The decision to open or close school during inclement or hazardous weather is based on a careful analysis and consideration of all relevant factors, which are listed below.

1. *Information on road conditions from transportation staff.* We must give careful consideration to the most dangerous roads in the district. The towns of Bethlehem and Woodbury have many winding and hilly streets. **Even if your street looks clear, travel elsewhere in the district may be dangerous**, especially in the higher elevation areas of Bethlehem. We must also consider that many high school students drive to school.
2. *Weather Forecast and Predictions.* The amount of snow and ice accumulated and forecasted is a major factor in the decision to close school. In addition, temperature and wind chill factors are important as students wait outside for the bus. We prefer not to make our decision **solely based on weather predictions, which are not always accurate**, but sometimes this is unavoidable.
3. *Building Conditions.* Our schools need to be a safe, healthy, and secure environment for all students and staff. Issues such as whether we have electricity and heat are critical factors to consider. **Parking lot conditions are important as entryways need to be safe and passable for all students and staff.**

**Please note that decisions for delaying or closing schools are not based on what neighboring districts are doing but rather what is best for Region 14. Decisions will likely not be made at the same time as neighboring districts as it is preferred that all possible information is available for Region 14 Schools.**

### WHO MAKES THE DECISION?

The Superintendent of Schools, is responsible for the final decision, based on the above factors and recommendations from the Town Public Works Department, District Facilities Department and our Consulting Meteorologist.

## HOW IS THE PUBLIC NOTIFIED?

Local TV stations are the primary media outlets we notify: WFSB Channel 3, WTNH Channel 8, WNBC Channel 30, and FOX Channel 61. In addition, as you know, we send out a “school messenger” alert. It is essential that parents make sure that their emergency contact information is updated in Powerschool. Please do not call the school unless it is an emergency. School delays and closings are also posted on the district website, [www.ctreg14.org](http://www.ctreg14.org). Posts will also be made to the district’s Facebook page.

## WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE?

A decision will be made by 5:30 AM as bus routes begin at about 5:45AM and media stations must be notified to broadcast a school closing alert before students and families, as well as teachers, leave home to travel to school.

**A typical delayed opening is 2 hours. Under the extraordinary circumstance that additional time is needed to clear roads and the potential of opening schools for a period of time exists, we would consider a 2 ½ or 3 hour delay. This would only occur if we could get a school day in and avoid having to make the day up later in the year.**

I recognize that the decision to open/close school or to delay the opening of school, due to inclement weather has an impact on families. Furthermore, I understand that our students are better served – both academically and socially – by being in school. However, and as always, **our top priority is the safety and well-being of our students**. Although my staff and I do our absolute best in this process, we know that often no perfect decision exists. We hope this explanation helps everyone understand the process I use to make the best possible decision for all students and staff in our district. Let’s hope for good weather this season.

Sincerely,

“Dr. O”



Joseph A. Olzacki, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools