

# Bracken County Schools

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## Memo to Parents: Cold Weather and School Closures

During the winter months several factors come into play that could delay the start of school or cause school to be closed altogether. One such factor is the apparent temperature or “feels like temperature” which is determined by air temperature, humidity, and air speed on a given day. On particularly cold mornings we continuously monitor the National Weather Service and closely monitor the weather conditions.

### How Does Cold Weather Affect School Closures or Delays?

Cold weather is a crucial element in determining whether schools will open on time, be delayed, or closed. The National Weather Service (NWS) provides three scenarios that we monitor:

- **Cold Weather Advisory:** Air temperatures OR wind chill values at or below -5 to -14 degrees.
- **Extreme Cold Watch:** Issued in advance of event, resolved to a warning or advisory based on the threshold criteria.
- **Extreme Cold Warning:** Air temperatures OR wind chill values at or below -15 degrees.

When the NWS issues an **Extreme Cold Warning** for Bracken County, we will typically make the decision to close schools for the day. This decision is often made on the morning of the school day. In the case of a **Cold Weather Advisory**, schools are likely to remain open unless there are operational issues such as problems with the bus fleet or mechanical failures in the school buildings. To ensure that the buildings and buses are operating safely, we perform a thorough assessment of these conditions each morning by 5:30am.

### Your Role as Parents:

We understand that some parents may feel the conditions outside are too dangerous for their children to be out in extreme cold. We respect your decision to keep your child home if you believe it is unsafe. If you do choose to keep your child home due to weather-related concerns, we ask that you contact your child’s school to request an excused absence for the day. Absences caused by issues like a car not starting or other cold-related problems will be treated as excused if the attendance office is notified.

### Ensuring Safety:

The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority when making any decisions about delays or closures. Rest assured, our school buildings are warm, safe, and well-equipped to provide an ideal environment for students during these cold conditions.

We also ask parents to ensure that children are dressed appropriately for winter weather. This includes wearing winter hats, gloves, heavy coats, socks, and boots. Exposure to extreme cold can lead to frostbite and hypothermia, and it is important for all students to be prepared for cold temperatures.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping us keep our students safe during the winter months.

Sincerely,



Clayton T. King  
Superintendent

