

School Closing, Delayed Opening, or Early Release Decisions

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Geneva City Schools (GCS) to determine whether there is a delayed opening, an early dismissal, a school closure, or a regular school day schedule during possible inclement weather. Any decision made by the Superintendent is a complex one that involves the consideration of many factors. And, any decision will have a significant impact on students, families, and staff alike. Students are best served by being in school, however, student safety is our top priority.

Notification Procedures:

1. In the event of inclement weather, everyone should assume that school will open as usual but begin monitoring the news outlets, school-affiliated social media sites, and our website.
2. Advance Notice: Only when the prediction of significant severe weather is clear, such as ice, snow, tornadoes, or hurricanes will GCS make announcements of school closings or delays a day in advance.
3. Same Day Notice: Decisions regarding cancellation or delayed start will be made as early as is possible, but generally by 6 AM.
4. In the event that the Superintendent determines that closing schools is the appropriate course of action, Geneva City Schools will immediately begin alerting parents and the public using the following methods. Summary of Notification Methods:
 - a. Possible Media Outlets –
 - i. TV Stations
 1. WTVY
 2. WDHN
 - ii. Radio Stations
 1. 95.5
 2. 99.7
 - b. Geneva City Website
 - c. Social Media Sites
 - d. All Calls - In the event of a delayed start, cancellation, or early dismissal we will also issue phone notifications to the families of enrolled students via an ALL CALL through our One Call Now system. Due to high call volumes in our area during such events, these calls may take a longer or shorter time to process. Therefore, families should not rely solely on receiving a call, but should also monitor the media and check our website and school-related social media sites for information.
5. Please do not call the schools, the Transportation Department, or the Central Office. Most schools and departments have limited phone lines. If schools are in session and the weather is getting worse, it is important that we be able to keep them open for emergencies. If it is still very early in the morning, it is unlikely that there are staff members manning the telephones.

Decision-making Process:

Geneva City Schools recognizes that there is no perfect decision for everyone. We hope, however, that this brief explanation helps to understand the decision-making process.

1. The procedure for closing schools is as follows:
 - We closely monitor weather reports from NOAA, National Weather Service, as well as major television and radio stations.
 - We are in contact with local law enforcement as needed.
 - We are in regular contact with neighboring school districts.
 - We are in contact with Geneva EMA.
 - This input is provided to the Superintendent and his leadership team to make a decision to close or not and then begin to inform employees, students, parents, and the various media outlets.
2. The Superintendent and staff consider several factors:
 - Road safety - the ability of students, staff and school buses to travel safely
 - Supervision of young students - some may not have adult supervision during the day if school is closed
 - Students who may not have a safe place to stay during the day

- Whether or not there is time to safely and effectively organize an early dismissal
 - Whether utility services are affected such as electric power and gas
3. It is sometimes necessary to monitor weather predictions up to a few hours before school is scheduled to begin. If the information to make a decision is not reliable during the school day, then the following procedures are used:
 - Administrative personnel begins driving routes at approximately 4:00 a.m. to determine road safety.
 - At approximately 4:30 a.m., the Transportation Director will contact the Superintendent and his leadership team to discuss the conditions throughout the district, with special emphasis on areas traveled by school buses.
 - At this time, the Superintendent will determine if more data is needed before the decision is made whether or not to open school.
 - Other conditions may influence the decision.
 4. If/when the Superintendent makes the decision to close schools, all notification procedures are put into place between 5:30 and 6:00 a.m.

Early/Delayed Dismissals

Early/Delayed dismissals can occur because of impending fast-approaching weather such as severe thunderstorms, tornado warnings, ice, snow, or by some type of facility failure such as a water main break or power failure. Utilizing all the resources mentioned above such a determination may be made by the Superintendent. Every effort will be made to notify parents utilizing the media listed above. Students will remain under school system supervision until safely transported or picked up by a parent or guardian. If there is an early release, all after-school activities will be canceled.

Delayed Openings

While delayed openings are rare, the above procedures will be followed but with a designation of being a “Delayed Opening” with the time delay noted. Delayed openings will always be two hours. Early releases will follow the early release schedule for the school the student attends.

Considerations for Delaying School Openings:

1. Assessing traffic conditions - Downed trees, limbs, or powerlines must be cleared. The delay can mean that traffic conditions are more relaxed and allow for safer travel.
2. Visibility during pre-dawn hours - The delay helps avoid the limited visibility during pre-dawn hours which is when buses normally start their routes. This limited visibility can impair a bus driver’s ability to see ice patches.
3. Identifying and locating icy road conditions - The delay allows county crews to locate and apply sand to icy patches.