

# NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent

50 East Street

New Milford, Connecticut 06776

(860) 355-8406 FAX (860) 210-4132



JeanAnn C. Paddyfote, Ph.D.  
Interim Superintendent

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

Occasionally there are inquiries about procedures for closing schools due to inclement weather.

**1. How is the decision made to delay, dismiss early or close schools?**

Decisions regarding school closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals are made by the Superintendent in consultation with the local police and highway departments, the school bus company, and area weather forecasters. The first consideration in making these decisions is student safety.

Road conditions are obviously a critical factor when making the decision and it is a difficult determination even when considering experienced car and bus drivers. **For high school drivers, please use your judgment as parents about whether your son/daughter should drive in inclement weather. If there is any doubt, please have them take the bus.**

**2. How do I find out if schools are closed or delayed?**

A variety of communication tools are used to announce any change to the district's regular schedule. Parents will be notified using the **School Messenger system**. The district will use this **automated calling system to notify parents in the event of an unscheduled close, delay or early dismissal**. This service allows us to send a message to all parents within minutes.

**New Milford Public Schools website:** Notification of school delays, closings and early dismissal are posted on the district's homepage at [www.newmilfordps.org](http://www.newmilfordps.org). School Messenger settings may be customized. You can control your notifications and add phone numbers, email addresses and text message numbers. Directions may be found at <https://www.newmilfordps.org/delaysclosings>.

**Text message and Twitter alerts:** Text message and twitter announcements go out as soon as a decision is made to delay or close school or in the event of early dismissal.

**3. How are delayed openings handled?**

Morning decisions about **delayed openings** are usually made between 4:45 a.m. and 5:30 a.m. based on road conditions and weather forecasts available at that hour. Decisions must be made at that point because the first school buses begin their morning runs shortly after 6:00 a.m.

**This year, depending on the weather forecast, we will use either a TWO HOUR or a THREE HOUR delayed opening. The notification will clearly state which schedule will be used.**

**School Start Times with a TWO HOUR Delayed Opening:**

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School	9:35 a.m.
Sarah Noble Intermediate, Northville and Hill & Plain Elementary Schools	10:50 a.m.

**School Start Times with a THREE HOUR Delayed Opening:**

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School	10:35 a.m.
Sarah Noble Intermediate, Northville and Hill & Plain Elementary Schools	11:50 a.m.

**Morning EXCEL classes are canceled when there is any delayed opening.**

If the weather does not improve during the delay period, a decision to close school for the day may be made. A School Messenger message and twitter alert update will be sent.

**4. How am I notified in the event of an early dismissal?**

The district will use all the tools referenced above.

Decisions about **early dismissal** due to weather problems are usually made during the morning and announced between **9:45 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.** During weather related early dismissals, students are dismissed two hours and 15 minutes early. **Afternoon EXCEL Pre-K classes are canceled when early dismissal occurs.** Lunch is always served, with times revised as needed.

**School Dismissal Times with an Early Dismissal:**

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School	12:00 p.m.
Sarah Noble Intermediate, Northville and Hill & Plain Elementary Schools	1:00 p.m.

**Morning EXCEL students go home at their usual time of 11:15 a.m.**

An **Accelerated Early Dismissal** may be called when a storm happens unexpectedly or is anticipated to arrive between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. If this should occur, the school messenger call will reference “**accelerated early dismissal**” as part of the message.

**Accelerated Early Dismissal Times:**

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School	11:00 a.m.
Sarah Noble Intermediate, Northville and Hill & Plain Elementary Schools	12:00 p.m.

**On a day when an accelerated early dismissal is called, morning EXCEL students will be dismissed at 12:00 p.m. with the elementary schools.**

**5. What about school sponsored events (concerts, athletics, special events and afterschool activities) on days when school is dismissed early or closed?**

All school sponsored events are canceled if school is closed or dismissed early. This includes any practices.

The ability to deliver a message is only as successful as the contact information that we have for your child, therefore, please make certain that your child’s school has your most up-to-date contacts. This information is updated annually at the beginning of the school year. If your information changes after the annual update, please let your child’s school know immediately.

Very truly yours,



JeanAnn C. Paddyfote, Ph.D.  
Interim Superintendent of Schools