

November 15, 2007

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff:

As the mild fall weather comes to a close, I am writing to you to remind you of Arlington's early dismissal, cancellation, and delay policies and procedures. This information will be invaluable as we approach inclement winter weather that may close or delay school operations.

Early Dismissal Times

In the event that severe inclement weather is anticipated before the normal school dismissal time, students will be released as follows:

- **Arlington High School** **10:00 a.m.**
- **Middle Schools** **10:00 a.m.**
- **Elementary Schools** **11:30 a.m.**

These are our traditional bus departure times for an emergency early dismissal. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances that severely threaten students' well-being, we will not conduct an early dismissal later in the day. Although this increases the possibility of dismissing students on the basis of weather forecasts that do not materialize, we believe that this will be safer for students and less confusing for parents.

Kindergarten Early Dismissal

As in the past, all Kindergarten families must be aware that on early dismissal days, Kindergarten students **cannot** be dropped off at their homes. They will be traveling on buses with all of the other elementary students in their school and will be dropped off at regular school bus stops.

Emergency Drop off Locations

School principals and secretaries have reported that many of our students do not know where they should go when school is dismissed early. This situation is further complicated when student emergency cards are incomplete or when students have multiple drop off locations throughout the week. Both of these conditions dramatically increase the likelihood of confusion on the part of students, teachers, parents, bus drivers and others. In order to safeguard each child, please confirm with your school a single emergency drop off location in the event of an early dismissal. Please discuss this plan with your children. We need your help to ensure that every Arlington student is transported safely to the correct location. Please remember that the schools are unable to call parents to alert them of an early dismissal. The sources for early dismissal information are listed at the end of this letter.

Cancellation Procedures

Inclement weather assessment begins at approximately 4:00 a.m. when members of the Transportation and Maintenance staff tour various areas of the school district. They also make contact with other agencies to determine the current condition of roads, parking lots, highways, and walkways. As you might imagine, given the very large geographic area of the school district (over 110 square miles), some areas of the school district may often receive more severe weather than others. Between 4:30 a.m. and 5:00 a.m., I consult with our Transportation and Maintenance departments, weather forecast services, and other school districts to make the best decision possible about delays and cancellations. Decisions on closing or delaying school will be made, if possible, by 5:00 a.m. in order to provide ample time for bus drivers and staff, many of whom travel significant distances to Arlington.

Delayed Openings

If it appears that road conditions will improve, a delay of school for a two-hour period will be announced. When a two-hour delay occurs, high school students will start their school day at 9:30 a.m. instead of 7:30 a.m. All other schools will similarly start two hours later than normal. A two-hour delay **CANCELS ALL A.M. KINDERGARTEN** sessions. If after announcing a two-hour delay we determine that safety conditions will not be improved, we will announce school closure by approximately 7:00 a.m.

Cancellation Information

There are a variety of sources of information for school delays, closings, and early dismissals:

- **Websites:** www.arlingtonschools.org
www.cancellations.com (linked to website above)
- **Local Radio Stations:**
- **Television:** WRNNTV
- **School Call:** (845) 437-3260
- **Central Office Hotline:** (845) 486-4450 (option #8)

Parents and staff may sign up for automatic email notification by registering with www.cancellations.com which can be accessed through the Arlington website or directly through <http://www.cancellations.com>.

We are hopeful that these procedures and protocols will be effective in maintaining the safety of our students, staff, and parents.

Sincerely,

Frank V. Pepe, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools