

November 01, 2016

Dear Parents:

If it is November, I guess we need to talk about the possibility of snow. It is hard to imagine when we have had a mild and pretty much dry fall, but just in case.....

In the event of a need to either call off school, to start late, or to release school early we will utilize our parent notification program called Bright Arrow. One thing we have learned with both this program as well as our previous program, there are times that due to the magnitude of calls being sent out, (compounded when many area schools are making the same decisions) that some calls get jammed up and aren't delivered immediately. **Make sure that you don't only rely on the parent notification system to be your only method to track school closing. Also please rely on watching or listening to major TV and radio stations from Sioux Falls.**

**At school registration you were asked for an update of home or cell number information. If you have had changes since then, please contact Jean Hudson at 743-2567, ext. 3001, or email her at [jean.hudson@k12.sd.us](mailto:jean.hudson@k12.sd.us) to give us your new number(s).** Every year we get calls from people out of our district wondering why we are calling them. This is due to when we aren't aware your numbers have changed.

First and foremost, please plan ahead. It is extremely important for you as parents to discuss with your children what to do for adequate apparel and emergency plans. Warm winter clothes, which includes gloves, hats, and footwear, is extremely important attire to wear to and from school, as well as on school bus trips in case a bus becomes stranded. If your child drives to school, please express the importance of taking their time and to drive slowly in the event of fog, ice, or snow. If weather causes them to be late, they will not be counted tardy. Better to be safe.

In case we would need to call off school during school hours, please rehearse with your child the plans they should have in the event you may not be home. Letting them know where you have a key to get into the house is also a good idea in case they come home to a locked house during the winter. Lining up an alternate location for your child to go to in case you are not home is also a necessary plan to make at this time.

The decision here to call off school is not easy and is made after gathering a lot of information. We do not call off school here unless the conditions certainly warrant it. Compared to other areas of the state, we are very populated and also have a good road system. With both parents working in most households, we find that calling off school usually creates a hardship for parents too. Sometimes the safest place for a child is in the school building. It is policy, that if we are having school, and you feel that it is unsafe for your child to attend school due to the weather; you can call the office of the school which your child attends to inform them that you are keeping your child home. Your child will not be counted absent on that day.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Jim Holbeck, Superintendent