

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Spokane Public Schools will be open daily as scheduled, regardless of weather, unless a closure or late start announcement is made. The superintendent has final authority in deciding whether or not to close schools due to inclement weather. Closure information will be broadcast by the local media beginning at approximately 6:30 a.m. and will be posted on [the ESD 101 website](#) as well as [spokaneschools.org](#).

In the event that it is necessary to close schools during the school day, the decision will be made using the same authority lines as outlined below with special consideration given to early dismissal of those students bused. Building administrators have plans of action for each school that will safeguard students in the event of inclement weather resulting in early closure of schools(s).

The decision to keep a child home on a snowy day when school is open rests with the parents. Parents who choose to keep their student home during bad weather should notify their school promptly.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

It is the goal of Spokane Public Schools to keep schools open during snowy weather. However, safety is never compromised when reaching a decision about school closures or late starts. While safety is the primary concern, state law requires the district to be in session 180 days. If the district closes schools, days must be made up at a later time during the school year.

Schools are among the safest places for students to be during inclement weather. In many cases, both parents and/or guardians work outside the home and the district believes that having children home alone during the day is not a good option. In addition, schools provide a warm, supervised environment for the children.

In the case of severe inclement weather which may result in the closure of Spokane Public Schools and facilities the following procedures will apply:

SNOW WATCH PROGRAM

The Snow Watch Program will begin the first week of November and continue through the third week of March. Each week during this period, a designated Durham Transit employee will be responsible for monitoring the local weather reports and forecasts. This person will visually check outdoor conditions during the evening and early morning hours and may be required to drive various routes.

The senior operations manager at Durham, or their designee, will contact the district's Safety & Transportation director between 4:30 a.m. and 5 a.m. to review weather conditions and determine what actions will be taken. These may include possible late routes, school closures, and/or canceled or altered routes.

SNOW REMOVAL

Snow removal in district parking lots begins when snow accumulation is, or is forecasted to be, three to four inches (3" – 4") or more. Maintenance and/or Custodial staff will clear school sidewalks as needed.

TRANSPORTATION

The district's Transportation department will determine if selected routes need to be revised based on weather and subsequent dangerous road conditions. This information will be disseminated by Durham through a parent phone chain for the families involved. Routes most likely to be affected are those outside the city limits.

SEVERE WEATHER

Spokane Public Schools believes it is important for students to have outdoor activities during the course of the school day. Fresh air and physical activities promote health, help develop strong bodies and improve learning in the classroom.

On occasions, weather conditions may be too extreme for outdoor activities. These would include heavy precipitation (rain or snow), severe winds, extreme temperatures and extremely low wind chill factors. Local weather advisories are provided by [the National Weather Service](#). School administrators should periodically check this website for changes in weather patterns and updates on weather alerts.

School administrators will often refer to the wind chill chart below to help determine if outdoor activities are appropriate for their students and staff. Proper dress is important for protection from the elements. Students and employees should dress appropriately for the weather conditions.

Tips on how to dress during cold weather

- ✓ Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing. Trapped air between the layers will insulate you. Outer garments should be tightly woven, water repellent, and hooded.
- ✓ Wear a hat. 40 percent of your body heat can be lost from your head.
- ✓ Wear mittens. Mittens, snug at the wrist, are better than gloves to keep your hands warm.
- ✓ Try to stay dry and out of the wind.
- ✓ Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs from extreme cold. This is especially important if you have a respiratory condition such as asthma.



Wind Chill Chart

