School Delays and Closings
Due to Inclement Weather

The School City of Hobart's first priority is the safety of our students and personnel. We encourage you to have a plan in place for school delays, cancellations, and emergency dismissal situations.

Many factors go into the decision to close or delay the opening of school. It is important for you to know the process.

**Monitoring Current Conditions & Forecasts:** School City of Hobart personnel continually monitor forecasts and live radar. Depending on the certainty of weather conditions, the call the close or delay school may be made the prior evening.

**Personnel on the Street:** The School City of Hobart and City personnel (Hobart Police Department and Street Department) drive Hobart's streets to determine actual road conditions. They begin the process as early as 2:00 am when bad weather is expected. The roads are continually assessed for safety, and we remain in contact with city, county, and state transportation departments. If by 6:00 am the roads are favorable and conditions are expected to be good to get the students safely to school, then school will be open.

**Ability to Clear Pathways:** The School City of Hobart also factors in our ability to clear school sidewalks and parking lots in a timely manner, or if snow will accumulate faster than we can clear.

**Visibility:** Blowing snow is also a factor in a delay or cancellation.

**Beliefs**

- Parents have a child specific perspective regarding their child and the threat of inclement weather.
- A parent may make a determination for their child, and should respect the perspective of another parent regarding their child.
- The School City of Hobart respects a parent's determination regarding their child's attendance at school during inclement weather. If school is open, or delayed, because of inclement weather, the school will respect the parent's decision to keep their child at home. Parents are expected to contact the school and inform school officials of their determination. The student will be counted as absent, per state code, and students will be given an opportunity to complete their academic work in the same manner as an excused absence from school.
- The School City of Hobart believes the public expects schools to be open and to provide education, supervision, and other services to its students (including meals that are provided for free and reduced lunch children).
- The School City of Hobart believes all parents are committed to keeping children safe and these parents will dress their children appropriately for the weather when sending the children to school.
- Variable weather conditions are to be expected in Northwest Indiana. The School City of Hobart believes parents have plans in place for weather related delays and closures.
Delaying or Closing School is Based on Multiple Variables

Freezing Rain/Sleet

- The most unpredictable weather variable is freezing rain/sleet. Freezing rain/sleet is temperature sensitive and fast-occurring. It begins and ends with little notice. When freezing rain/sleet are predicted, the decision regarding school is delayed until the latest possible time in an effort to observe the most current and local conditions. Such a decision will generally be made in the morning.

Snowfall

- Snowfall is more predictable than freezing rain/sleet. Meteorologists generally give a 2 inch variable when predicting snow accumulation. Because the variation in actual snowfall, when compared to predicted snowfall, the decision regarding school status is delayed until the snow accumulation indicates a need for action. Such a decision, except in extreme situations, will generally be made in the morning.

Extreme Snowfall Situations

- When snow has accumulated to a significant level, or is at such a level with more snowfall predicted, then the decision regarding school may be made the previous evening. A significant level is one in which local authorities have indicated it is unlikely streets will be passable by the following morning.

Extreme Cold

- Temperature prediction is increasingly accurate. The School City of Hobart uses the hourly temperature predictions for its zip code from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (noaa.gov). If air temperature is predicted by NOAA to be -10 degrees or below (the starting point for wind chill concerns with calm wind) at 6:30/7:00 a.m. the school will consider a two-hour delay for the start of school. If the air temperature is predicted to remain at -10 degrees or below at 9:00 a.m. the school will consider closing. Such a determination will be made as early as possible, perhaps the evening before, but certainly by 6:00 a.m. in the morning.

Extreme Wind Chill

- Wind chill prediction is not as accurate as temperature prediction because wind speed is more variable by time and location. While NOAA observations and predictions are based upon the open conditions of the Gary Airport, these conditions are often different Northwest Indiana. Local observations of wind speed will affect the decision regarding delaying or closing school. Wind chill concerns emerge at a predicted wind chill temperature of -20 degrees. If wind chill is predicted by NOAA to be -20 degrees or below and local wind conditions are predicted to mirror the airport wind conditions at 6:30/7:00 a.m., the school will consider a two-hour delay for the start of school. If the wind chill is predicted to remain at -20 degrees or below and local conditions mirror the airport wind conditions at 9:00 a.m., the school will consider closing. The variability of wind speed is a key factor. Such a determination will be made as early as possible, perhaps the evening before, but certainly by 6:00 a.m. in the morning.
Functional Facilities and Transportation

- Utility issues (gas, electricity, water) may cause a school to close. Issues associated with cold, including water supply to a building and electricity to a building or neighborhood, may cause school to be cancelled.
- Buses are critical to transporting students. Issues associated with cold, including not starting, may cause school to be delayed or cancelled depending on the severity of the situation.

Delayed Start

In order to provide time for roads and weather conditions to improve and become safer for travel, the School City of Hobart may use a delayed start of school.

A delayed start to school allows the school district to do the following:
1. Provide more time to assess for safe conditions to start school including roads, buildings, and transportation.
2. Project whether a closure of school is needed.
3. Allow school to be held with improved conditions and not have to make up a weather day because of a school closure.

If a two-hour delay is called lunch will be served.

The following schedule for classes will be used:
Hobart High School will start at 9:45 a.m.
Hobart Middle School will start at 9:45 a.m.
Elementary Schools will start at 10:55 a.m.
Early Learning Center @ GE will start at 11:10 a.m.
*When riding a bus, please catch the bus two hours later than you normally would.
School Cancellation
All School City of Hobart schools will be cancelled. This includes all after-school events, meetings, and practices. Exceptions may occur with approval by the Superintendent if the emergency situation no longer exists, but will be on a case to case basis. The state of Indiana requires 180 student days. Please refer to the school calendar regarding make-up days. Additionally, the School City of Hobart will communicate these dates with you on the School City of Hobart Website, Facebook, and Twitter.

Emergency Closings and Delays
In the event of inclement weather or other conditions, notifications regarding delays and closures may be obtained from the following:

**Radio:**  WAKE (1500am), INDIANA (105.5fm), WZVN (107.1fm), WGN (720am), WBBM (780am)

**Television:** CBS (Channel 2), NBC (Channel 5), ABC (Channel 7), WGN (Channel 9), FOX (Channel 32), CLTV, Lakeshore Public TV

**Internet:**  School City of Hobart Website: Information will be posted in large red letters; please make sure to refresh your web browser each time you check. Information is also posted on Facebook and Twitter.

**Phone:** School Messenger Notification System: Parents can control what numbers are contacted in an emergency through Skyward under the Skylerts tab. Please ensure that your contact information is updated.

**Emergency Closing Center:** Emergency Closing Center

Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

Here Comes the Bus
Parents and students are encouraged to use Here Comes the Bus to determine when the bus is approaching and know when to go to the bus stop. Here Comes the Bus allows for the monitoring of bus location with GPS. If you need more information, or to sign up for Here Comes the Bus, visit the Here Comes the Bus website. The school code to sign up is 46342. Please contact the Transportation Department for assistance. (219) 947-2413.