



Special Edition Communiqué

Sub Zero Wind Chills Approaching Midland



Information on how Midland Public Schools handles sub-zero wind chill temperatures

How cold it feels on a winter day is a complex function of several factors. The most important factors are air temperature and wind speed. Extreme cold temperatures with strong winds are more dangerous to us than just cold temps because strong winds driving down wind chill temperatures. However, as we all know, the effect of extremely cold wind chill is plain old discomfort; the air feeling colder than it really is, so to speak.

It appears this Friday (January 5) the predicted temperature combined with the winds out of the northwest may approach a level where 15-30 minutes of exposure is the maximum exposure time for a person to stay safe. The lowest wind chills will occur between 2:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on Friday.

MPS will be following this wind chill situation closely. We do not have a set policy on when we close due to windchill, but -20 or below generally will force a school closing.

Parents should have a plan on how to best dress your children and limit the time your child would be exposed to the wind chill conditions should we have school. Parents should also be prepared for a school cancellation should that be necessary.

It is a difficult balance and decision on these cold days, as cancelling school puts a hardship on many families for appropriate and safe supervision of their children. Our school buildings and transportation fleet are warm and safe, and yet, exposure at bus stops and for those children who walk to school can be dangerous if exposure is beyond the 15-minute recommended time. Driving children to school may also be an option for some parents.

Student safety whether school is open or closed will require all of us communicating and working together.

If at all possible, we will make a decision by 8:00 p.m. on Thursday evening about school on Friday. If we need to wait and see actual temperatures, we will make a decision at approximately 5:30 a.m. on Friday.

I hope this information is helpful for our Friday cold morning plan.

Here is a helpful link for more cold weather information: http://www.weather.gov/media/dtx/briefing/DTX_Briefing.pdf

