



NEWLOTHROP AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 15, 2019

Dear Students, Parents, Staff, & Community,

It's been a Michigan winter to remember, in which we have experienced a number of school day closings. As of today, we have had 14 school days cancelled because of weather and road conditions. Schools in Michigan are permitted to cancel 6 school days for inclement weather prior to having to make up school days. Michigan also allows the option of applying for 3 additional days via a waiver process. So, there is a possibility that a school district could miss up to nine days if the waiver is granted.

The State minimum requirement is that we have 180 instructional days and 1098 hours in our academic calendar. While many people want an answer for all of the above questions now for planning purposes, we cannot make decisions until we have further information from the State.

With more winter weather ahead of us, there is still potential for additional cancellations. At this point there are several unknowns. Among the unanswered questions:

1. What are the total number of days missed thus far?
Answer: 14 snow/cold days as of February 14th
2. Will the State do anything to forgive more days?
Answer: There is discussion in the legislature, but there is not a definite answer at this time.
3. Will we make up days during the school year?
Answer: No, I did not feel comfortable rescheduling days during the remainder of the school year due to planned family events and holidays, i.e. February 15 (Teacher Professional Development), February 18 (President's Day), April 19 (Good Friday), May 27 (Memorial Day). However, in future academic years, this could be an option with the appropriate notice.
4. How many days would we need to add onto the end of the school year?
Answer: We receive 6 days to start the school year. I can apply for 3 additional days through the Michigan Department of Education, which is not a guarantee but a solid bet to receive those additional days. So that leaves us with 5 days to makeup at the end of the school year.

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5. Why not add minutes to each of our school days the rest of the school year?

Answer: I do not think it is instructionally sound, and we still need to meet the 180-day minimum, along with the 1098 hours, so adding minutes would only satisfy the hours requirement.

There is talk of legislation that would forgive additional days, and even one potential bill that would forgive all of the days used this year because of the weather. Therefore, until these details are finalized, it would be too early for us to address the issue, which in the end, might not be necessary. If, and when, a decision needs to be made, we will communicate it promptly. Thank you for your patience, and please know that our primary goal is to always keep our students and staff safe.

Until we know more about our makeup days, please plan on school being in session into at least the second full week of June, rather than our original last student day of June 7th for 2018-2019 school year.

Thank you for your understanding, please contact me at 810-638-5091 if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Anthony Berthiaume, Ph.D.
Superintendent

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