

Dear Jeffco Public Schools staff, families, and students,

## **2021-22 Winter Weather Closure and 2-Hour Delay Procedures**

*(Charter school families should check with their schools for weather and closure procedures.)*

As we approach the winter months and the possibility of delayed starts and snow days, we are writing to remind you of our inclement weather policies. Covering over 770 square miles, Jeffco Public Schools includes metro and foothills areas, as well as some mountain communities. Jeffco Public Schools rarely takes snow days or implements a delayed start time. We live in an area where snow is typical in the winter and unless the storm is extreme, school will not be cancelled. Parents and guardians can always make the decision to not send their students to school if they feel it is unsafe to travel. Our schools are flexible with late arrivals and will always excuse a student absence when called in by a parent or guardian.

When considering snow closures, we rely on many data sources to inform our decision. These include CDOT and Jeffco County Road & Bridge Department, Skyview Weather, and other real-time forecast services. We also use inspections by staff and community volunteers living in our neighborhoods to report on road conditions during and throughout the storm, forecasts for later in the day, and input from our expert drivers and maintenance crew in Jeffco Transportation Services. The safety and security of our students and staff is always our top priority. We make the best decision possible given the information we have and the timing with which we need to make the call. While our county, municipalities, and CDOT are expert snow removers, sometimes the timing and impact of an incoming storm can change.

We make our open or closed decision as early as possible in order to accommodate the school bus dispatch, food services deliveries, and substitute teacher arrangements. We publicly announce the closure or delayed start and notify families directly by 6:00 a.m. on the impacted school day. If a large incoming storm hits early the night before and is forecast to continue throughout the next day, it is possible that we may make the closure or delay decision the night before and will then notify families in the evening. In either situation, we will send out an email notification to families and the media as soon as possible and implement our phone and text alert systems.

### ***What are the possibilities during a weather situation?***

**After-school activities:** If weather conditions during the school day turn dangerous, after-school activities may be cancelled. **The decision will be made no later than 1:00 p.m., and communicated to all families and staff shortly afterwards.** All students are expected to go home after school if after-school activities are cancelled and after-school care programs may close early. Staff will remain until all students are picked up, however we ask parents to please pick up students as soon as they are able if notified of after-school cancellations.

**2-hour delay schedule:** A 2-hour delay at the start of school due to bad weather. **A late start decision will be made as early as possible and direct notification will be by 6:00 a.m.** Buses are delayed two hours, and students are not expected to arrive at school until two hours after the regular start time. There will be limited staff at schools to supervise any early-arriving students.

**Snow day:** The determination to cancel school for an entire day will happen as early as possible. Families and staff will be directly notified by 6:00 a.m. Our remote learning programs, Jeffco Virtual Academy and Jeffco Remote Learning Program, will participate in snow days (no attendance).

**Remote learning day:** We are hopeful to avoid remote learning days due to inclement weather and will use a snow day or two-hour delay as our main options. We intend to prioritize in-person learning through “makeup” days already built into our district calendar. Remote learning days would only be considered or utilized if a weather incident is extreme and closure is expected for *multiple days in a row*. To transition to remote learning days, we must have sufficient lead time to communicate to students, staff, and families to prepare for a multi-day closure.

### ***How We Will Message:***

School closures are announced through a variety of channels, first posting on our district [website](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#) page and direct messaging sent to Jeffco families via email, text, and phone using SchoolMessenger. Depending on your personal settings, you will receive an email, text message, and/or phone message. In addition to direct messaging, media outlets are notified of cancellations and delays. News outlets, websites, and social media may have the information prior to direct notification to families and staff because we do not want to message families after 9 p.m. or earlier than 6:00 a.m.

***What families can do to stay informed:***

Parents and guardians should ensure we always have the most current contact information for them and any emergency contacts, through [JeffcoConnect](#) and follow all Jeffco Public Schools social media channels. We also suggest you bookmark the Jeffco Public Schools [website](#).

***What families can do to prepare for winter weather:***

- With temperatures dropping, please make sure your student has dressed appropriately and is prepared for outdoor recess and activities on all days. If needed, call your school for possible clothing assistance.
- Please review these [winter driving tips](#) from CDOT about winter driving safety.
- Students and staff should be ready for possible weather issues by bringing their belongings, materials, or technology home on days when the forecast indicates a possible snowstorm is approaching. This can avoid the possibility of something of personal importance being locked in a school building during a closure.

Our first priority is the physical safety of all students and employees. Remember that you have the ultimate responsibility for the safety and well-being of yourself and your students. Families can always decide not to send their students to school on a snowy day if they feel it is unsafe, and remember to notify your school for the absence to be excused.

Thank you,

Jeffco Public Schools

[www.jeffcopublicschools.org](http://www.jeffcopublicschools.org)