

Mustang



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District News from Independence Community Schools

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If you have items you would like to see in the newsletter, or if you have information you would like to place in the newsletter, please contact Mary at the Administration Building by calling 334-7400 or e-mail her at mcooksley@independence.k12.ia.us

What's Next?

By Superintendent Devin Embray

The bond issue was defeated by a very large number of people. Those voting no were in the neighborhood of 1,700 while those in favor were approximately 1,200. It was a disappointing loss, but definitely one to learn from. There have been five bond issues over the past 9 years. The first was a remodel offered up in 1997-1998 and the past four were new high schools on a new site. The last four began in 2003 with one per year including this year. The board of education listened to the concerns from each failure and tried diligently to make changes that they hoped would answer those concerns. What has happened is just the opposite. Each time from 2003 the voter turn out has been extremely high, but the percentage of those voting yes has declined. There are many theories as to why this has happened, I even have my own. In the end that really doesn't matter as much as what the voters say. It appears that the community has spoken. I do not know what will happen in the near future with where the board of education would like to head concerning this issue, but what I do know is that we will continue to provide excellent programming to our students and give them the best we can with what we have until that decision is made. I believe in our community as well as our dedicated parents and students. We have a wonderful staff that instructs wonderful students. We have support for what we do with students and what we expect from them and it is greatly appreciated. Regardless of where you stand on the issue of a new high school, I hope that you will continue to support the great education that our students are receiving now. Everything can only be enhanced at this point. Please let me know your thoughts on the high school issue as well as your board members. Together we can make a difference if we pull in the same direction.

January, 2007

Superintendent's



Devin Embray

Corner

District Calendar of Events

January 3rd – School resumes

January 8th – Math SAC

January 9th – CCC meeting

January 12th – No School – Professional Development

January 15th – School Board Meeting

January 22nd – Special Education SAC

January 24th – Early Out – 1:00 Dismissal – Professional Development

January 31st – Early Out – 1:00 Dismissal – Professional Development



*Independence Community Schools*

1207 1st Street West
Independence, Iowa 50644
319.334.7400

Visit our website at:

<http://www.independence.k12.ia.us>

Board of Education

Dawnye Sturtz, President
Bob Reiff, Vice President
Kevin Greenley, Director
Charlie McCardle, Director
Kevin (KC) Robb, Director

Superintendent

Devin Embray
319.334.7400

**Director of Curriculum and
School Improvement**

Mary Cooksley
319.334.7400

Director of Finance

Chris Kimball
319.334.7400

Transportation Director

Michael Donnelly
319.334.7435

Food Service Director

Nancy Michels
319.334.7415

Technology Director

Dan Good
319.334.7405

East Elementary Principal

Dr. Mary Jean Blaisdell
319.334.7425

West Elementary Principal

Josh Lyons
319.334.7430

Middle School Principal

Meredith Miller
(319) 334-7415

High School Principal

Karl Kurt
(319) 334-7405

**High School Asst
Principal/Athletic Director**

Dave Ross
319.334.7405

Big Brothers, Big Sisters

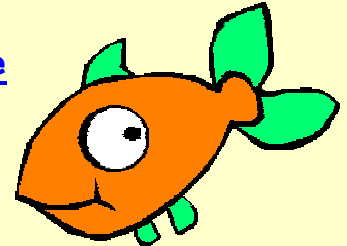
Coordinator
Jeannie Neeley
319.334.7415



District News and Information

Fish Nominations

- ❖ Choose Your **Attitude**
- ❖ Be **There**
- ❖ Make Their **Day**
- ❖ **Play**



- **Teresa Barske** – Special Education associate
- **Cathy Gilson** – Special Education associate
- **Meredith Miller** – Middle School Principal
- **Mary Cooksley** – Curriculum and School Improvement Director
- **Dan Good** – District Technology Coordinator
- **Angie Tournier** – High School Kitchen Manager
- **Tia Shaffer** – MS Family and Consumer Sciences
- **Judy Wulfekuhle** – MS Secretary
- **Bruce Daker** – High School Industrial Technology
- **Wade Stahr** – High School Industrial Technology
- **West Elementary Staff!**
- **Penni Gaul** – Pre-School – ECSE
- **Angie Bonefas** – Substitute at ECSE
- **Donalyn Pogue** – Kindergarten – East Elementary
- **Brandi Klima** – First Grade – East Elementary
- **Nancy Black** – Third Grade – West Elementary

Does your child have a teacher that possesses the Fish! Philosophy Principles each and every day? Nominate them for entry into the Fish! Community. **Make Their Day** by showing your appreciation for all they do for students. To make a nomination call Mary at 334.7400 or e-mail the nomination to: mcooksley@independence.k12.ia.us

Curriculum Work Collage



CCC discusses issues in one of the Focus Group meetings

Curriculum Work Collage

The work being done in the district never ends. November and December were filled with Subject Area Committee meetings. Science, K-5 Language Arts, Foreign Language, Social Studies as well as the Curriculum Coordinating Council all met during the busy months of November and December. The pictures on this page reflect some of the important work being accomplished by teachers across the district.



Paul Brown, Garry Anderson and Jim Heinz work on Science assessments (above) Below is Sarah Crawford, Melissa Tate, and Stephanie Funke collaborating about the Spanish Curriculum



Above – Members of the K-5 Language Arts Subject Area Committee analyze the wall for possible gaps and/or overlaps in their curriculum.

Below – Sandy Hood, Dorthea Bovy, Carole Franz, and Brenda Hearn look over the Social Studies “Wall”. Right – Kathy Meyer, Joan Goedken, and Sue Knott analyze and refine their Science assessments.



**Food Service****News**

A reminder for parents that you may apply for free/reduced lunches at any time during the school year. Please find income levels for reduced priced meals attached. If your household size has changed or your income has changed this may change your eligibility since your original application. *Note: An increase in income after an application is approved does not need to be reported.*

The current free/reduced meals application can be downloaded from the school website at www.independence.k12.ia.us

If you have questions please feel free to call Nancy Michels, Food Service Director at 319-334-7423.

Reduced Priced Meals Income Guidelines for 2006-2007 School Year					
Household Size	Yearly	Monthly	Every 2 weeks	Weekly	Twice a month
1	18,130	1511	698	349	756
2	24,420	2035	940	470	1018
3	30,710	2560	1182	591	1280
4	37,000	3084	1424	712	1542
5	43,290	3608	1665	833	1804
6	49,580	4132	1907	954	2066
7	55,870	4656	2149	1075	2328

* Income is gross income before taxes are deducted.

Bus Transportation Request

I would like to ask all parents of East, West, and Middle School students who ride the rural busses home to call the bus garage if their children are not riding the bus home due to being picked up by parents or going home early.

Bus garage #334.7435
24 hour answering machine

Thank you, Mike Donnelly





Elementary

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

January

Jan 3 School Resumes

Jan 4-9 Testing

Jan 12 No School – In-service

Jan 24 1:00 Dismissal – In-service

Jan 31 1:00 Dismissal – In-service

February

Feb 7 1:00 Dismissal – In-service

Feb 21 1:00 Dismissal – In-service

Feb 22 Kindergarten Registration
1:00-7:30 East

Mileage Club Volunteers Needed!

If you would like to devote 15-30 minutes each week outside at recess to help students reach their goals in the Mileage Club, please call East Elementary to volunteer your time!

Mentors Needed!

If you are interested in being a mentor and volunteering your time to work with a child for approximately 30 minutes each week on a regular basis, please call and let us know!

Wanted: Substitute Associates

If you are available to substitute occasionally as a classroom, office, or library associate (duties vary), please call 334-7425. We need YOU!



Principal's Corner

By: Dr. Mary Jean Blaisdell

Happy New Year! We are nearly halfway through the school year and there are so many events ahead of us! We hope that you enjoyed the holidays and the time with family and friends.

December was a busy month. The New Early Childhood Center opened up and looks terrific! It's a great facility and the staff have all worked very hard to get it up and running. Also in December, the **Junior Kindergarten** held their Winter Vocal Music Program at East and all the children performed so well for their family and friends! Students at East Elementary raised over \$1500 to donate towards the Launch a New Library Fund and presented this to Laura Blaker at an assembly.

We again held **Respect & Protect assemblies** with all students at East Elementary to remind them of our policy and rules. It would be a good time for parents to remind students of their expectations for student behavior as well at this time. We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to make our buildings safe and happy places for students to be.

During January, we will have our second set of **assessments** at the K-2 level. These tests will begin January 4 and continue through January 10. These assessments measure instructional reading level and comprehension, fluency, and phonemic awareness. Math facts and computation are also measured at this time. The results of these tests will be shared at conference time in February.

There will be a community Open House for the new ECC on January 9th from 6:30-7:30. All are welcome to join us in a celebration of its opening!

Looking ahead, for those of you who have students who will be 5 years of age by September 15, 2007 and are anticipating enrolling that student in kindergarten, you may want to mark the following dates on your calendars:

Kindergarten Registration

1:00-7:30 Thursday, February 23

Kindergarten Roundup

Monday/Tuesday, March 12-13

Thanks,
Mary Jean Blaisdell

Box tops for Education/ Pop Can Tabs/Milk Moola for Schoola



We continue to collect General Mills Box Tops, Pop Can Tabs, and bottle caps and bag tops from Kwik Star products. Our PTA will again be taking care of these collections for us! This is a good way to help us earn extra money for things we need. Thanks! If you are interested in spending time at school or at home sorting/cutting and redeeming these items for our school, please call!





Kindergarten Corner:

Winter Comes to Kindergarten

January will bring a study of cold weather things: polar bears, mittens, penguins, and SNOW! We will enjoy many hands on experiences with these topics. Sondra Cabell, Interpretive naturalist, from Fontana Park, will come to East to share an activity that teaches students about protecting their bodies against the cold weather. During the winter months young children struggle with the task of dressing themselves with warm clothing. Allow your child the opportunity to complete this task on his/her own.

Students are growing and learning to manage their own work habits (working independently, following directions & using time wisely.) Academic skills will focus on letter & sound relationships to build early reading skills as well as develop our abilities to write our ideas. Number readiness (counting, naming and writing numbers to 20) is also an area of emphasis. Kindergarten students are looking forward to celebrating 100 days of school this month (if we don't have too many snow days!) We will participate in many activities involving 100.



Kindergarten is wondering, "Where is the snow?"

Launch a New Library Fundraiser

The students at East Elementary raised a total of \$1580.65 dollars to go towards the city of Independence's new library. The students are very excited about a new public library in our town and cannot wait to have the opportunity to use such a facility! Thank you to all students and parents at East Elementary!

First Grade Focus

Time for a New Year!

First graders began the New Year with the study of penguins. Students explored the Arctic and Antarctic regions of the globe and looked at the continents and oceans. This will lead into a study of the ocean and sea life, with an emphasis on dolphins, whales, and sharks.

In math, we have been working on measurement, focusing on the various units of time. Students were given the opportunity to tell time using both analog and digital clocks. We have practiced the days of the week, as well as the months of the year. We will celebrate time again on the upcoming 100th day of school!

Second Grade Scene:

Happy New Year!!!

We hope that your family had a relaxing holiday break. January is a busy month in second grade. We celebrate Black History Month with an emphasis on Martin Luther King, Jr. Students need to continue to work hard on their addition facts as we are progressing toward larger, more difficult addition concepts. Basic subtraction facts should also be practiced.

This month brings the one hundredth day of school. It is a fun time to reflect on how much the students have learned already this year! Please continue to encourage your child to read each day. We appreciate your support!



East elementary students present a check for \$150.65 to Independence Public Library Director, Laura Blaker



January, 2006

WEST
ELEMENTARY

Miss Iowa Visits West

Before Heading to Miss America Pageant in January

Miss Iowa visited West Elementary on December 20, 2006 for a presentation to the students about the Character Counts Pillars. She reviewed the importance of having good character by sharing what the colors for each pillar stood for.

Students from the audience were chosen as volunteers to assist with the presentation and were all thrilled with her talented singing voice. She sang *Reflection* from *Mulan*. She also filled the request by a student from the audience to sing *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*. She sang this without the assistance of background music.

Miss Iowa did an outstanding job and reemphasized the message of character.



Miss Iowa sings for West students



West students learn the meaning

West Elementary Testing Coming in January

Beginning on January 8, the students of West Elementary will be taking CBM assessment. This assessment is a measure of students' ability to read a short text fluently as well as tracking their ability to self-correct while reading. The assessment also measures how well students are able to solve basic math facts. The data collected from this assessment is used to determine the needs of our students and assist teachers with decisions about instruction.

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills will begin on Monday, January 15. It is vital that your children attend school this week. We also encourage you to make sure they receive a good night's sleep the night before testing as well as eat a well balanced breakfast each morning.

Prior to the week of the ITBS testing, we will be focusing on giving sample tests to review the format of the tests as well as discuss various strategies to use while taking the tests.

These tests are important and will measure what it is our students know and are able to do. This data will assist us with making decisions for our school.

Coming Up:

Jan. 3	Classes Resume
Jan. 8-11	CBM Testing
Jan. 12	NO School
Jan. 15-19	ITBS Testing
Jan. 24	1:00 Dismissal
Jan. 31	1:00 Dismissal

the bottom line

by Josh Lyons,
Principal

Students are busier and face more challenges in today's culture than twenty years ago. Now, I do not have scientific evidence to prove this generalization, but it's something that I have noticed even in the past few years.

These challenges come in the form of more homework and less time, higher standards for learning, challenging home lives, bullying, and peer pressure. I have read something recently that may seem to be common sense, but something we do not always think about on a daily basis. If our students are at a heightened state of anxiety or feeling of

helplessness, new information being learned cannot be stored. However, feelings of contentment, joy, play, and comfort actually improve the working memory, verbal fluency, more flexible thinking, and social skills.

The point is that we need to continue supporting our students positively and providing safe and stable environments in which they can thrive.



West Elementary Media Center

The West Elementary book fair was very successful. We took in \$2798.28. As a result, we received \$917.17 in books (which includes a classroom set of Children's Thesaurus) plus \$240.98. We will be using the money to hard bind the paperback books we received from the fair. Thank you so much to all who helped at the fair and to those who purchased books and other items.

We are also collecting empty print cartridges, which we recycle to earn money for more library books.

At the 3-5 grade level, we are teaching information literacy skills during their library time. These skills are designed to help them develop competence in research abilities so that they will become independent media center patrons.

We also have been putting a big emphasis on keyboarding that the 3-5 grade level. The students are becoming quite skillful in using good keyboarding skills.

I have enjoyed my return to the elementary after a twelve year break at the middle school level. I am pleased with how much our West students are using the library. Our goal at the Media Center is to encourage our students to continue to be engaged readers. We do this by providing them with current titles to support the curriculum here at West and by purchasing new fiction books that will encourage the students to be lifelong readers.

Mrs. Wieland



T.A.G. News

By
Delene Donnelly

Fourth and fifth grade Project Think students have been busy learning how to use the scientific problem-solving process through hands on experiments. They have been sharpening their observation skills in order to make predictions, conduct experiments to test their hypotheses, record data, and draw conclusions. Students have also been exploring the characteristics and usefulness of simple machines.

After the holidays fourth and fifth grade students participating in Project Think will use their creativity and problem-solving skills to come up with inventions that will solve problems they have identified. Watch for news about the upcoming spring invention convention where these young inventors will have an opportunity to demonstrate their inventions.

Third grade math enrichment students have been developing problem-solving strategies with a focus on using logical reasoning, making a table, and organized lists. Fourth, fifth, and sixth grade Math Olympians are competing in the national Math Olympiads program. Students practice solving challenging problems that are above their grade levels. During the months of November through March a monthly test is given. Each of the five tests has five problems to solve. Students who solve one out of five problems are considered to be very successful due to the level of difficulty of the problems. Scores are entered online to the national competition and our team is nationally ranked. Many of our students have surpassed the goal of earning one of five problems, with several students solving five out of five!

Student authors in the creative writing classes have been writing pieces to enter in several regional, state, and national contests. They have been working on choosing descriptive language to improve letter writing, story writing, and poetry. Look for some of these young authors' pieces in future newsletters.



School

Middle

Meredith Miller, Principal

Calendar of Events JANUARY

- 3 Classes Resume
- 9 BBB W. Delaware @ 4pm 7th-T, 8th-H
- 11 BBB Waverly-Shell Rock @ 4:15pm 7th-H, 8th-Waverly
- 12 No School, Staff Development
- 16 BBB Benton Comm @ 4:15pm 7th-H, 8th-Keystone
- 19 BBB Vinton-Shellsburg @ 4:15pm 7th-Vinton, 8th-H
- 23 BBB Marion @ 4:15pm 7th-T, 8th-H
- 24 1:00 Dismissal, Staff Development
- 26 BBB Vinton-Shellsburg @ 4:15pm 7th-H, 8th-Vinton
- 30 BBB Oelwein @ 4:15pm 7th-H, 8th-T



Mrs. Reed 6th Grade Science

The 6th grade science students have had a productive fall. We used boats, pendulums, planes, and flippers to study variables and the scientific method.

The growth of Wisconsin Fast Plants taught the students about germination, the plant life cycle, parts of the plant, and pollination and fertilization. We harvested the seeds last week and found that we had a good crop of seeds for next year's 6th graders to grow! As a culminating activity, students will each receive a plant to take home.

Students learned about Rift Valley in Africa where Jane Goodall has conducted her chimpanzee observations. Earth Foundation offered them the opportunity to adopt an acre of this area for every ten t-shirts that were sold. I'm happy to report that 169 acres of land was adopted! A big thank you to all who participated!

For the second year, 6th graders are involved in Physic's Quest that is distributed by the American Physical Society. Using four tasks involving static electricity, current electricity, solar energy, and light interaction with lenses the students figure out Benjamin Franklin's Secret Message. Our answers will be submitted, and correct answers could result in a prize!

The new year brings new challenges and new learning experience.





School

January Calendar

- 3 – Classes Resume
- 4 – WR (H) Marion/Columbus
9th B/GBB at Waterloo West
- 5 – JV/V GBB (H) Beckman
JV/V BBB at Beckman
- 6 – JV/V WR at Benton Comm. Inv.
JV G/B BB (H) Waverly 2:00
V G/B BB (H) Waverly 5:00
- 8 – 9th GBB at Columbus
8th Grade Registration 7:00 p.m.- MS
- 9 – JV/V GBB (H) Maquoketa
JV/V BBB at Maquoketa
- 11 – End of Term 2
WR (H) Beckman/W. Dubuque
9th GBB at Van Horne
- 12 – Non Student Day – NO SCHOOL
JV/V GBB at Marion
JV/V BBB (H) Marion
9th GBB at Marion
9th BBB (H) Marion
- 13 – State Jazz Contest
WR – Osage Duals Inv.
JV WR – Indee Invite
- 16 – JV/V GBB at Vinton
JV/V BBB (H) Vinton
9th BBB (H) Vinton
- 18 – WR (H) Benton Community
- 19 – JV/V GBB (H) West Delaware
JV/V BBB at West Delaware
9th GBB (H) West Delaware
9th BBB at West Delaware
- 20 – WR at Anamosa Duals
JV WR at Starmont Inv.
- 22 – 9th BBB at Columbus
- 23 – JV/V GBB at W. Dubuque
JV/V BBB (H) W. Dubuque
- 24 – Staff Development – 1:00 Dismissal
- 25 – WR at Vinton-Shellsburg
9th GBB (H) Vinton-Shellsburg
- 26 – JV/V GBB (H) Benton Community
JV/V BBB at Benton Community
- 27 – Wamac JV/V WR at Marion
9th BBB – Holmes Tourney
- 29 – 9th GBB at Cedar Falls Holmes
- 30 – JV/V GBB at Central DeWitt
JV/V BBB (H) Central DeWitt
9th GBB (H) Benton Comm.
- 31 – Staff Development – 1:00 Dismissal

By Karl Kurt, Principal

Parent-Needs Survey

During our most recent parent-teacher conferences we passed out a parent needs survey for each family that attended, and we mailed home a copy of the survey to those who were not able to attend. On behalf of the high school, we wanted to thank those parents that took the time to share their thoughts about our school. We find the information to be very beneficial as we continue to improve our program for our students.

Post-Secondary Classes

As many parents are aware, we offer the opportunity for our students to take college courses through Hawkeye Community College. This is a great service that is provided to our students, and the cost of the course is paid by the Independence School District. We have a number of students that are taking advantage of this opportunity. The combined numbers for this fall and spring are listed below:
Juniors---18 students taking 20 classes
Seniors---60 students taking 131 classes
Total---78 students taking 151 classes

Registration for Incoming 9th Graders

*Registration for 8th grade students from Independence Middle School is set for 1/8/07.

*Registration for 8th grade students from the St. John's School is set for 1/10/07.

Regent Universities Admission Policy

The Regent Universities changed the admission policy to become effective in 2009. They will use the Regent Admission Index. This index considers class rank, cumulative high school grade point average, ACT score and the number of core subject courses completed in high school and applies multipliers to each. The index would be counted like this:

- 2 x ACT composite score
- 1 x high school rank (percentile)
- 20 x high school GPA (4.0 system)
- 5 x # of core subject courses

The regent universities have agreed that students who achieve an index score of 250 points would qualify for automatic admission to any of the three regent universities.



The Road to State

The football program, with support from Girls soccer, Girls Track, Girls Basketball and Wrestling is in the process of buying a jump trainer. This machine encourages cardio-exercise through head-to-head timed competition. The machine also builds fast and slow twitch muscles in user's legs. Additionally, the Athletic Department, with the strong assistance of Charlie Albright, Head High School Custodian is also in the process of sprucing up the Fitness Room with fresh paint and some donated mirrors. The paint adds to the positive attitudes of the athletes and the mirrors are useful so that lifters can check their stances and insure proper lifting form. The athletic department, with the aid of Chris Kimball, Indee's Business Manager and Mike Donnelly, Transportation Manager will be obtaining 40 large lockers over the Christmas Holiday. The lockers are large enough to hold all the equipment of individual athletes, even football players. It is planned that these lockers will free up the room next to the Fitness Room that has been called the "pad room" in the past and allow it to be renamed the Aerobic Room. The road to state begins in the Fitness Room and hopefully that path will soon be painted Mustang Maroon and covered with Indee hoof prints!



DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS = Battle of the Bands

Coming soon to the Independence High School will be the 2nd Annual Battle of the Bands Fundraiser. This event will take place on Saturday, January 20th, starting at 6 p.m. with an open dance for all to enjoy leading up to the main event, The Battle of the Bands, at 7 p.m. The show will feature local youth talent as well as some of the schools very own teachers performing music of era or choice. The event will be open to the public and surrounding communities. All ages will be admitted as there will be no profanity or inappropriate material involved with this show. The purpose of this event is to raise money for Dollars for Scholars.

Students of the Independence High School AV Tech department and Mustang Top Guns are putting on this event and hope to make this a remarkable night. The event will include the dance before for an hour followed by the Concert featuring students from Independence as well as some familiar High School faces (i.e. faculty) doing there best to support the students! The show will showcase some Classic Rock, Country, and some oldies for music. The first, second, and third place bands will receive a percentage of proceeds for there efforts. For further information please contact the High School

DETAILS

Saturday, January 20th

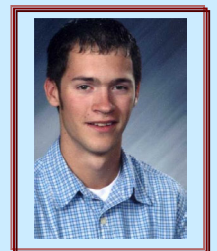
Dance: 6-7 p.m.

Battle of the Bands: 7-10 p.m.

Tickets in Advance: \$2 (available at High School & Middle School offices)

Tickets at the Door: \$3

Contact: School Office 334-7405 or Travis McBride 334-4449 tarvis9er_zero@hotmail.com



We hope to see everyone there for a great time of music and fun!



Independence Community School District Weather Related Information

Dear Independence Community School District Parents/Guardians:

We will soon be experiencing our first real evidence of winter. It is time that we prepare for inclement weather and snow-laden roads that offer increased danger and risk.

The Independence School District's bus drivers have had an excellent safety record and always try to reduce any ever-present risk due to weather and road conditions. Buses are equipped with radio communication, communications are maintained with County and State road crews, buses are kept in top maintenance condition and drivers are experienced with driving conditions of the area.

Regardless of all we do to reduce risk, it does not guarantee that a bus will not stall or get stuck. Parents and students can reduce risk by simply dressing students warmly so they remain comfortable in any given situation.

In the Independence School District there are few days that the weather will not allow us to run buses and have school. Generally if we can run buses, we will have school. Occasionally we may have a late start, perhaps two hours late, in order to allow highway crews to clear roads, clear access areas, and to have the fog lift.

The transportation system of the Independence School District involves three levels of responsibility as to whether a child should attend school on a bad weather day. These levels are: The School administration and transportation supervisor, the bus driver and the parents. On days when weather and road conditions may be unfavorable the transportation supervisor and administration personnel are up before 5:00 a.m. to listen to weather forecasts, to check out road conditions first hand, to communicate with County and State road officials and to receive calls from certain people from various areas in the district. The bus supervisor will communicate with the superintendent of schools or his designee and a decision will be made to send out buses and have school.

If a decision is made to call off school, late start or early dismissal, that information will be on area radio, television stations, and the district web site as early as possible; generally by 6:30 a.m. **Please note, although the radio and TV stations listed below may not be your favorite listening/viewing choice, these are the only stations that will be contacted for weather related information for the Independence Community School District and St. John's.**

Radio

KQMG - 95.3 FM

KOEL - 950 AM

WMT - 600 AM or 96 ½ FM

KMCH - 94.7 FM

KFMW - 108 FM

TV

KWWL - Channel 7 or 11

KCRG - Channel 9 or 10

KGAN - Channel 2 or 13

Web site: www.independence.k12.ia.us. Click on District Information and scroll down to Delays and Closings, click to open.



After a decision has been made to have school and run buses the next decision is made by individual drivers. Some roads may not have been plowed or may be in poor condition. The individual bus driver must decide whether it is safe to travel on those roads. The drivers are instructed to observe safety first, to turn around if conditions are unsafe. If part of the bus route cannot be driven, every attempt will be made by transportation personnel to contact parents so children will not wait needlessly for a bus that is not coming. Please have patience. When the weather is bad it is likely the buses will not run on time and could be late. It is very important that students be dressed for the weather conditions and should not be left alone to wait for the bus.

The third and ultimate decision must be made by parents. Weather and road conditions can vary greatly across the Independence Community School District. Transportation decisions that are right for most of the school district might not appear safe in a given area of the district. Whether or not school is in session and whether or not the bus is on its scheduled route, no student should be sent to school when a parent feels the risk is too high. If a parent decides a student is unable to attend school because of bad weather, the student will be given an excused absence and allowed to make up missed schoolwork.

Even when all three levels of responsibility are exercising their best judgment rapid changes in weather will occasionally cause problems. The worst situation might make it impossible to get children home with buses. In that case each family should have an arrangement for their student(s) to stay overnight with someone in town. The student(s) and the school should be aware of those arrangements at the beginning of each school year.

Weather is so unpredictable that even expert forecasters upon whom we rely make mistakes. Some errors in judgment at all three levels may occur. Every effort will be made to make a decision that is based upon the best information available, it is in the best interest of everyone involved and is based upon the safety of students and what is best educationally.

If a decision is made to call off school, run buses late or dismiss early, that information will be broadcast on all local radio and when possible on television stations as early in the day as possible (refer to radio and TV stations on page 1). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Devin Embray or Mike Donnelly.

Respectfully yours,

Devin Embray
Superintendent of Schools
334-7400

Mike Donnelly
Transportation Director
334-7435



Independence Community School District

1207 First Street West
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