

## **WVCSD EdTalk: January 14, 2022**

### **Dr. David Leach, Superintendent of Schools**

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We're hoping for a mild winter with minimal disruptions to school schedules. It is, nevertheless, important to communicate our protocols for school delays and closures.

Due to inclement weather or other emergencies, we may need to cancel, delay, or close schools early. In these emergency scenarios, parents and students should have a well-coordinated plan in place. If a parent is not available, children should know where to go and what to do.

When it comes to school closures and delays due to inclement weather, the safety of our children and employees is our top priority. We receive information about road conditions from the Town of Warwick Department of Public Works. School staff also inspects the roads, walkways, WVCSD parking lots, and bus lanes.

The District considers the following options:

**Two-Hour Delay:** This extra time allows for road clearing and for school workers to prepare grounds and facilities (i.e., deicing, clearing sidewalks, etc.). We often consider this option when conditions are expected to improve later in the morning.

**Closing School:** When the weather prediction and conditions suggest that a late start is not feasible, a school cancellation is required. School closures are often due to snow or ice, but they can also occur for other reasons (e.g., power outages, etc.). The student calendar provides for five snow days this school year before makeup days are required.

**Early Dismissal:** We make every effort to avoid bringing students to school only to send them home again. This option is only used on rare occasions when the weather unexpectedly changes during the school day. We strive to stay away from this option as much as possible.

We will first update the WVCSD website in the event of a weather-related closing, delay, or early dismissal. An alert will appear at the top of each page with the necessary information. Parents, faculty, and employees receive emails and automated phone calls. The District also publishes an update on its social media accounts.

WVCSD makes every effort to make decisions in the evening, recognizing that parents require time to make appropriate arrangements. When there is any doubt, and there often is, we wait for the most recent morning forecast and road conditions update. In that instance, we try to

make this information available before 5:30 a.m., so parents and staff know the decision before leaving for work.

Here are some highlights from our schools this week:

### **Pine Island Elementary School**

The school is launching a new program that highlights positive behaviors and actions called Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS). We are very excited to join our friends at Park Avenue, Sanfordville and the Middle School, where PBIS has been in existence for 10 years. PBIS is a school-wide program to encourage desired behaviors by using positive measures. For example, lunch and hall monitors are trained in the many different ways students can be recognized for demonstrating positive behaviors such as walking in the hallway, saying please and thank you, and sitting on the purple or gold seat spot in the cafeteria. PBIS has a positive effect on student learning and our school environment.

### **Park Avenue Elementary School**

The Park Avenue PTA is thrilled to bring back the annual Read-a-Thon, which will run through Friday, January 21st. The PTA has set a reading goal of 50,000 minutes to help motivate and challenge all students. The reward will be an outdoor dance party. The Read-a-Thon motivates our students to be consistent with their reading habits, which is such an integral part of learning. Establishing a consistent reading routine improves students' concentration, vocabulary, and language skills. Best of all, it fosters a love of reading.

### **Sanfordville Elementary School**

The students in second-, third-, and fourth-grade are starting a new STEM unit. The beginning lesson to every unit starts with an introductory story. The story explains the problem and how the students will use the engineering design process to solve the problem for the unit. The students will then answer questions about the story and the engineering design process. In the first grade, students worked on creating their ideas for machines utilizing Lego bricks. Each student had their own cup of bricks that they used to build their product. During this activity, students worked on the 4Cs to solve this challenge (collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity).

### **Warwick Valley Middle School**

Our eighth-grade scientists are testing the theories of chemistry and have been pondering the idea of alchemy. Students have been learning that when a copper penny is zinc-plated it will appear to change from its copper color to silver color. And by using sufficient heat, a zinc-plated copper penny can be changed to a gold color. Providing students with the opportunity to see this change and then create it themselves is invaluable to the learning process.

### **Warwick Valley High School**

The Physical Education Department hosted a single-elimination volleyball tournament during lunch. Approximately 150 students and teachers participated in the event, which raised \$400 for local food pantries and Backpack Snack Attack. The event was well-received by the students and faculty.