

## GORHAM SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

It is well past that time of year again where we have to worry about the inevitable white stuff falling from the skies here in Maine. We've been lucky so far, but I'm thinking our luck is bound to run out here soon – so I wanted to make sure you were all aware of our snow cancellation processes and procedures here in Gorham. Below is information that will assist you in understanding what to expect on bad weather days that might impact our schools:

1. Cancellations and delays are generally based on overall road conditions in Gorham and our ability to safely run buses. Additionally, due to the fact that so many of our students walk to school, we also base decisions on our public works crew's ability to plow and clean sidewalks. In some circumstances, cancellations and delays may also be based on forecasted conditions.
2. The Gorham Schools utilize full day cancellations, 1-hour delays, and 2-hour delays as well as early dismissals depending upon the forecasted conditions and timing of storms. If school is delayed for 1 hour, all bus pick-up times and school start times will be delayed by exactly 1 hour. For example, if your student would normally have been picked up by 7:15 and the school day began at 7:45 the new pick-up time would be 8:15 and the new school start time would be 8:45. Similarly for a 2-hour delay, all bus pick-up times and school start times will be delayed by exactly 2 hours.
3. IF school is cancelled or delayed, communication regarding these decisions will be relayed to you via:
  - Blackboard (our automated phone, text, and email system). This notification would typically occur at approximately 5:30 a.m. if a decision is made to cancel in the morning, or by 10:00 a.m. if a decision is made to cancel at the half day.
  - District web site: [www.gorhamschools.org](http://www.gorhamschools.org)
  - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/hperrysup>
  - TV Stations: Channel 6, Channel 8 and Channel 13
  - Radio Stations: WGAN 560 AM, WMGX 93.1 FM, WPOR 101.0 FM, WYNZ 100.0 FM, WTHT 99.9 FM, WLAM 1470 AM, and KISS 97.9 FM

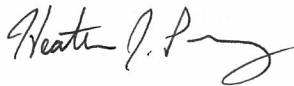
4. If school is cancelled for the day, all after-school programs, activities, and athletic events are automatically cancelled unless the district specifically communicates otherwise.
5. There may be times when school is in session, but the weather is expected to worsen throughout the day and into the evening, causing the district to cancel all after-school programs, activities, and athletic events. Communication on these occasions will be via announcements in schools, our automated messaging system, and our website.

Please understand that attempting to forecast the weather conditions here in Maine is difficult even for our professional meteorologists. The Gorham Schools will always attempt to make the best decisions possible with the safety of our students at the forefront of each decision. On a day that is forecasted to have poor weather conditions, I typically will start my morning at 4:30 a.m. getting up to watch the weather, calling our public works crew who are on the road, and other area Superintendents to see what conditions are likely to be in their area. I will then log onto several weather sites, check radar and satellite images and timing of the storm, all before making my final decision. Then once the decision is made, all I can do is sit back and hope that all of that data is correct and that mother nature cooperates!

None of this, as you might imagine is an exact science. The Gorham Schools will always do its best to make the right call, however, please know we understand that it is always the parent/guardian who makes the final decisions regarding the safety of your student(s). If there is ever a circumstance where school has not been cancelled or delayed, yet you feel as though it is best to keep your child home because of road conditions please do not hesitate to do so.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [heather.perry@gorhamschools.org](mailto:heather.perry@gorhamschools.org).

Thank you!



Heather J. Perry,  
Superintendent of Schools