



DISTRICT OFFICES

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BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE CODE C9P: BSD COLD WEATHER PROCEDURE

Summary

Recognizing that Burlington School District (BSD) students walk and take the city bus and that students do not always dress appropriately for the weather, extremely cold winter weather puts our students at risk for developing hypothermia and frostbite. "Frostbite is damage to skin and tissue caused by exposure to freezing temperatures – typically any temperature below 31F." ([NHS](#), 24 August 2021)

Vermont Principals' Association "Procedure for Athletic Participation in the Cold" uses the [National Weather Wind Chill Chart](#) to determine when to cancel winter sports to prevent cold weather injuries. BSD Athletics follows these procedures as outlined by the VPA, and the following procedures were based on this scientific chart for decision-making.

Definitions

Real Feel Temperature: How the temperature outside actually feels to a person taking into account windchill and other factors. BSD uses "Real Feel" temperatures to make final determinations regarding outdoor activities.

Appropriate Winter Clothing: Appropriate Clothing consists of a winter coat that zips/closes, a hat, mittens/gloves, snow pants, socks, and winter boots.

If families need assistance finding appropriate winter clothing, please reach out to the building school counselor or school nurse. We have a system in place to provide students in need with winter clothing donated by BSD community members.

Outdoor Activities Procedure

If "Real Feel" temperatures are below zero degrees Fahrenheit, all outside activities will be moved indoors, including, but not limited to, recess, physical education classes, afterschool programs, athletics, etc. If field trips cannot be moved indoors, they should be rescheduled to accommodate this procedure.

A principal or their designee will determine the temperature and "Real Feel" using [Weather.com](#) before school and before recess. (Placing the zip code for Burlington on their page will give both the actual temperature and the real feel temperature.) All schools will use these temperatures as the universal decision-making tool for all buildings on cold days.

Principals and building leaders are responsible for ensuring there are procedures in place to check that all students are appropriately dressed before going outside.

Building Access

BSD will ensure that school buildings are open before and after school for students when temperatures with wind chills “feel like” any temperature below zero degrees Fahrenheit. With students walking to school and waiting at bus stops, we consider this extreme cold a safety issue. Temperatures with wind chills in this range are considered dangerously cold if exposure is over 30 minutes.

Communication

Before the official start of winter, and during cold weather weeks, principals should use space in family newsletters to remind families that they should do their best to dress children in appropriate winter clothing, limit outside time to as little as possible when commuting between home and school, ensure warm rides or shorter walk times to school, and have students stay indoors as much as possible. Principals can also use this space to communicate about opportunities to obtain winter gear for free.

School Closure

In the rare event of extreme temperatures, the Superintendent will use their best judgment and/or will follow State guidance to determine if school should be canceled. In the event schools will be closed, the Superintendent will provide notice to families and staff as far in advance of the school day as possible.

Clerical Information

<i>BSD Version:</i>	<i>BSD Cold Weather Procedures</i>
<i>Date Adopted:</i>	<i>January 10, 2025</i>
<i>Legal Reference(s):</i>	
<i>Policy Reference:</i>	<i>C9: Wellness</i>