

FALL RIVER JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Superintendent
Greg F. Hawkins



"Education is Power"

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District students, parents, and staff members,

As we move into the winter months, precautions are taken to insure our students and staff members have a safe commute both to and from school. In extremely snowy or icy conditions, our district has occasionally called a "Snow Day." While safety is the priority, on many occasions, conditions improve throughout the day. Ice melts, roads are plowed, sidewalks cleared, buildings warmed, branches removed, and people in our outlying areas have ample time to "dig out" and either arrive at the bus stop or begin their personal commute to school.

State law mandates each school be in session for a required number of school days, and, depending on specific grade levels, a prescribed number of instructional minutes. Each "Snow Day" means our district may be subject to "making up" days/minutes later in the school year. FRJUSD has sufficient instructional minutes at all grade levels, affording the opportunity to consider starting school later in the morning and not losing an entire day of school.

Several years ago, our district implemented a Late Start policy, something other districts with weather conditions and patterns similar to those we experience have been practicing for some time. We are apprising each of you of the procedures we will be following in case of a Late Start.

- Shortly after 6:00 A.M., our district will deliver an "All Call" phone message to each student and employee's household, indicating our district is either having a Snow Day or a Late Start Day. Based on satellite weather predictions, the district will announce school will be cancelled or start at the later time. Sorry for the early call—many students and employees leave for school very early and we want to give notification to everyone at one time.
- If a Late Start Day is called, everything will be delayed by two hours. Schools will begin shortly after 10:00 A.M. and end at the conclusion of their "normal" school day. Busses will pick up students two hours later than normal—if a student normally boards the bus at 7:20 A.M., they will be picked up at 9:20 A.M. Students will return home using their normal mode of transportation.

I believe this Late Start Day will help keep everyone safe as well as assist us in our goal of giving our students the greatest opportunity to learn in a safe and consistent manner. Thank you for your flexibility. Please let your student's school know if you are not receiving the "All Call" messages, or if there is any way that we can assist you in getting updated information.

Sincerely,

Greg F. Hawkins
Superintendent

Greg Hawkins

To: FRJUSD ALL USERS
Subject: Just in case...

Good afternoon FRJUSD employees,

The bulk of this email was sent over two years ago, but, as we look at weather forecasts and predictions for the next few days, I'm sending it again, with a couple of changes. Hopefully everyone is familiar with the procedures for a *snow day* or *late start day*, but we need to also prepare for a **power outage** or **water outage**. I understand the likelihood of us being without power is far greater than to be without water, but there is always the possibility; please plan on the same protocol for either.

While circumstances may vary between the two ends of the district (Fall River and Burney), basically, if there is no power to start school at either end of the district, we will revert to our *Late Start* procedures (found on the district web page). Everything will be "backed up" roughly two hours. An initial call will be sent shortly after 6:00 A.M. announcing a *Late Start* school day. If there is no subsequent call in the next two hours, plan on the *Late Start* schedule—school will begin around 10:00 A.M. If school is being completely canceled, you will receive a second phone call before 8:00 A.M. announcing this. District employees and students will be subject to "make up" this day, just as if it was a Snow Day. Please be reminded that decisions will be based on the school's location, not necessarily conditions at your home.

If we lose power once everyone is at school, site administrators will call PG & E to determine the length of the outage. If the power is going to be out for some time, two scenarios exist...if we lose power **before** the first serving of lunch, students will be sent home at a time when busses can arrive and we can insure our younger student's parents have adequate notification for their student's home supervision (1-2 hours); if we lose power **after** lunch is served, students will remain at school for the remainder of the regular day and busses will run their normal routes. We will have to work around foreseeable problems of not having computers, smartboards, and, in "interior" classrooms on our sites, no visibility, but our top priority, as always, is our student's safety. Adjustments can be made.

And finally, what if students are in school and the power goes out at one end of the district but not the other? Since elementary and junior-senior high schools bus routes are tied together, if, for example, power is lost at Fall River High School but not Fall River Elementary, whatever decision is made at FRHS would apply to FRE. We do not have resources to run two separate bus routes. In this same scenario, if there is power in Burney, students would remain in our Burney schools, keeping to their normal schedules.

As with any precautionary measures, different circumstances may warrant different decisions. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility.

Keep dry, stay warm, and be safe!

Greg F. Hawkins

Superintendent
Fall River Joint Unified School District