



Dr. Michael J. Thomas, Superintendent of Schools
Colorado Springs School District 11, 1115 North El Paso Street, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903
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Dear School District 11 Families,

I want to assure you that the safety of our students, staff, and families is top of mind when we make the difficult decisions about school closings, early safety dismissals, and delayed safety starts. Sudden weather changes are part of what we expect in Colorado. To help us ensure the safety of our students to the best of our abilities, School District 11 has appointed supervisory personnel to drive sections of the District during a storm. We assign the driving sections because, as we all know, the weather at Doherty High School can be totally different from the weather at Chipeta Elementary School or Mann Middle School.

The supervisory personnel report on weather and road conditions, especially noting poor visibility, poor traction and other hazardous street conditions, wind chill factors, and snow accumulation. These on-the-street supervisors report their findings, and I'm briefed on the conditions. We evaluate the conditions and further driving reviews and conversations may occur. The employee reports are used in addition to the reports from the U.S. Weather Bureau and the Colorado Springs Street Division, and in coordination with neighboring school districts. After all the data is examined, a decision is made for either a delayed start, school closure, or school as usual. All of this usually begins the night before a storm is predicted to hit and is accomplished by 5:30 a.m. so that the decision may be reported.

All D11 families and staff receive notification of the decision via email, text (if you've opted in to receive texts from the District), and app push notification on the D11 Loop, as long as your contact information is correct and up-to-date in the Q student information system (or PeopleSoft system for employees). You can also check for delays/closures on the D-11 Web site at www.d11.org and/or Comcast channel 16/Falcon Broadband channel 73, and/or by calling 520-2000 or 520-2300 for a recorded message. We also communicate the decision on our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter feeds, as well as with the local media.

Please remember: You as a parent make the final decision concerning the safety of your child. If you think conditions are unsafe when the District keeps schools open, you may keep your child at home. Remember to follow the proper absence reporting procedures by calling your child's school to report the absence, and your child's absence will be excused; all work may be made up without penalty.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael J. Thomas', is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Michael J. Thomas
Superintendent of Schools