



**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

**Avon Public Schools**

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**Gary S. Mala**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

February 11, 2013

Dear Parents, Staff and Concerned Citizens:

I hope this message finds you resuming a normal routine in the aftermath of the blizzard that impacted our state over the past few days. I am pleased to once again communicate with you and am happy to announce that we have worked diligently with local officials and in particular, the Department of Public Works, to reopen schools tomorrow, Tuesday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. I am appreciative for the equipment and staff deployed by the DPW yesterday afternoon and evening to assist our hard working staff in the removal of the snow from school properties. I am also appreciative of the efforts made by this same staff to open Avon roads to allow for safe travel.

Understanding that there is a tremendous amount of snow in many locations that may have altered sight lines and the width of certain roads, I am requesting your cooperation with being more attentive to those areas known to be bus stops and areas where children congregate and/or walk to and from our schools. This heightened sense of awareness on our part will serve us all well as we anxiously await the thaw leading us to spring. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Over the past two days, I have received a number of calls inquiring about the methodology to determine whether schools are open, delayed, dismissed early or closed. As you can well imagine, weather related or not, this is a highly complex decision with a number of ramifications in regards to any event requiring such an action. The decision is made after conferring with our bus contractor, representatives of the local public works department, the police department (when and if necessary), a meteorological consultant, our district facilities staff and local school officials in other nearby communities. Other factors considered during the decision making process include reviewing the number of school staff who may travel long distances to work, the areas of travel, and the number of students who drive to and from our high school. Please know that the decision is never made in isolation or without considering all of the most current data available to us.

While generally made in the early morning hours of a particular day, the two most recent closures, due to the timing and certainty of the weather forecasts, announcements were made the evening before the actual closure. This was done to allow you as families enough lead time to make alternate arrangements for child care, work and other circumstances that we know are disrupted when a change to the normal school schedule is made. Please recognize that we do everything we can to avoid altering the school schedules but the deciding factor is always what I believe to be best to insure the safety of our students and staff.

Last and certainly not least, the number of school closures experienced so far this school year has had a significant impact on extending the calendar for this school year. I am in the process of

reviewing all of the available options for meeting the statutory requirement of 180 student days and will communicate this information by the end of this week.

Thank you for your continued support and patience as we work to resume a more normal schedule.

I remain very truly yours,

*Gary*

Gary S. Mala  
Superintendent of Schools